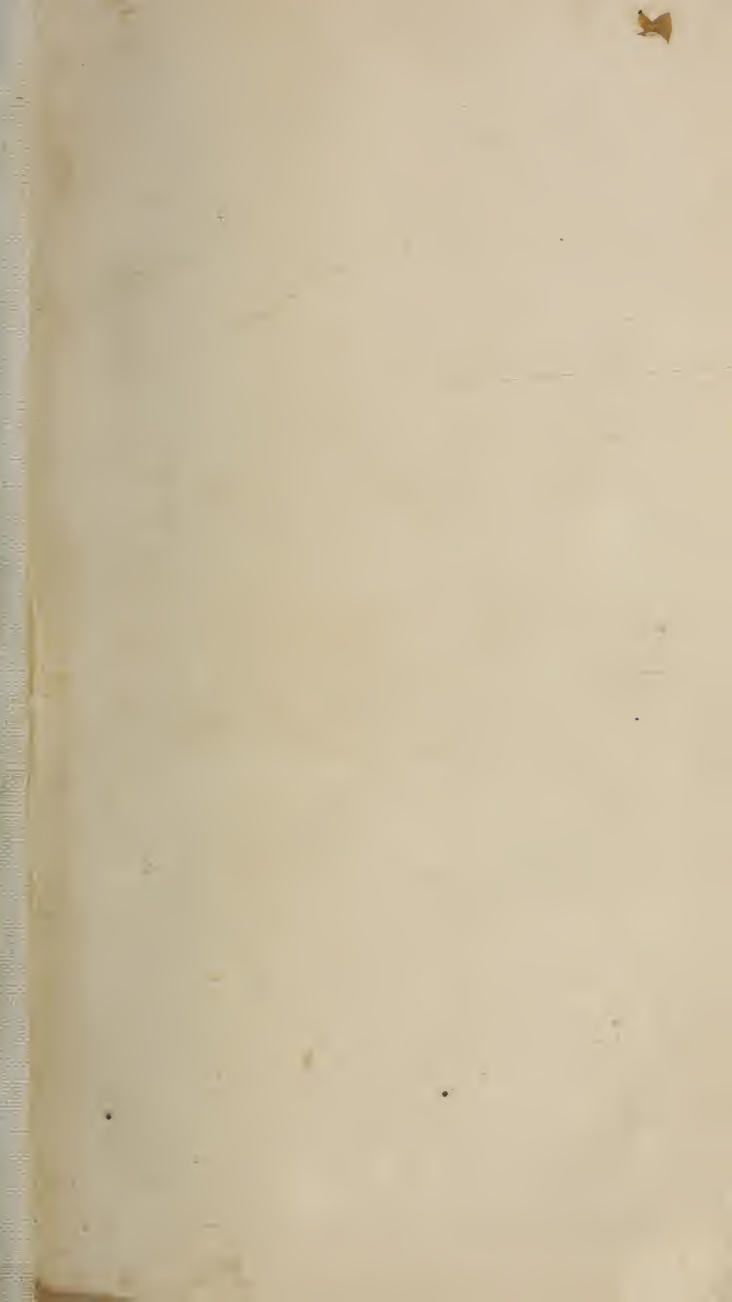




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ABD-EL-KADER.

Smith, Elder & Co, Cornhill.

THE PRISONERS
OF
ABD-EL-KADER;

OR,

FIVE MONTHS' CAPTIVITY AMONG THE ARABS,

IN THE AUTUMN OF 1836.

BY

MONS. A. DE FRANCE. *copied*

by, Francois Antoine, known as

TRANSLATED BY

Ernest

R. F. PORTER.

LONDON:

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CHAPTER I.

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IN writing the history of my captivity among the Arabs, I have no pretension of composing a literary work: I am a sailor, and not *un homme de lettres*; therefore, search not in this book for that which I have not been able to place there—elegance of style, harmony in the periods, a clever distribution of matter, a brilliant colouring in the descriptions. I have suffered, I have seen, I have observed; such is my book, such is all my science, such are all my claims upon the attention of my reader.

Restored to liberty, I was anxious to return my thanks to my commanders, for the anxiety my fate had caused them, for the perseverance they had employed in rescuing me from the hands of Abdel-Kader. I had expressed my gratitude to the persons who were interested in my fate, had told my friends how sensible I was to their marks of remembrance and their regrets, and thought there to limit the proof of my joy and gratitude. My commanders and my friends have strongly invited me to collect together my remembrances, to arrange my

notes, and to publish them. I take advantage, therefore, of my stay at Paris, where the Minister of War has summoned me, to satisfy the desire of my friends and those of my superiors, by writing up this journal of my captivity, which, perhaps, the public also may not read without interest; for it is true, and that which is true always awakens the attention and the curiosity. But, I repeat, I claim the indulgence of the reader for a work as rapidly executed as conceived. Recall to mind, in running over this book, that the author is a sailor, a young man who has dedicated his life to the service of his country; that he can lay no claim to interest and sympathy, either from imagination or style, with both of which he is unacquainted, but from a sincere love of his country, and from the horrible treatment our enemies have caused him to suffer during five months of captivity.

I have collected together facts. I have been witness of remarkable events among the Arabs; interesting scenes have passed under my eyes, in their tents; I have passed through countries unknown to our soldiers; I have seen Abd-el-Kader near; I have followed him in many expeditions; I have been able to judge of the power and influence of the Sultan.—I have told you what my book is.

I shall avoid, as much as possible, hazarded reflections; I shall endeavour, above all things, not to touch upon the discussion of the system of colonisation, of pacification, or war. I am too young to treat of such questions; and the number of lawyers, orators, and writers, who occupy themselves with

these subjects, is sufficiently great. I may, therefore, without difficulty, abstain from appearing in a debate, where my presence and my habits as a sailor would be quite out of place.

The brig "Loiret" had been stationed at Arzew* for five months. I was on board this vessel, commanded by Lieut. Roland de Chabert. The life we led on board was *triste* and monotonous. It is easy to conceive the *ennui* we suffered, on a desert coast, without any kind of amusement. Our only pleasure was walking every day on the shore; still we could not pass the advanced posts, for the Arabs prowled incessantly around the few houses the French had erected at Arzew, to endeavour to carry off the droves of cattle, and there was some danger in passing the line guarded by our troops. The Arabs had already attempted more than one *coup-de-main*, but they had always been repulsed with loss.†

The 11th of August, 1836, we had on board the exercise of firing at a mark: a piece of wood, painted white, placed about one hundred paces from the beach, served as an aim. After the exercise, we received an order to hold in readiness for

* Arzew, a seaport, between Algiers and Oran. With a few repairs and works, which would cost but little, it might be made the safest, most commodious, and easiest port of access along the coast. We found some stones, covered with Latin inscriptions, and a great number of gold and silver medals of the Roman empire: the Arabian and Spanish were more rarely found.

† I have learnt that the Arabs had succeeded, in the month of January last, in carrying off the cattle from Arzew.

the morrow forty of the crew, who, joined to the troops of the garrison, were to reconnoitre a spring, situated at two leagues' distance from our advanced posts. I was appointed to accompany this expedition.

While I was keeping my watch, on the evening of the 11th, the doctor of the ship, M. Clinchard, as much regarded for his talents and information as for his amiable and cordial character, kept me company. As we smoked, in walking the quarter-deck with long strides, according to our custom, "I am to be of the expedition," said the doctor to me; "you must lend me your little pistols; they will be of great service to me, in case of an attack."

"I keep my pistols," replied I to him. "When I shall be dead, when you shall have had me sewed up in a flag, and thrown me into the sea, with a ball at my feet, I shall no longer have need of the pistols; then, my body to the sharks, and my pistols to my good and brave friend Clinchard."

"To-morrow," replied he, "your pistols will belong to me."

"How!—But I am not ill—I have not the cholera, Doctor, so I fear nothing. I shall not take your drugs; and as long as I shall not be laid on my side, or exposed to your lancet, my pistols will adorn my berth."

"To-morrow night," replied Clinchard, "I shall have your pistols."

"Old Bedouin! Marabout of misfortune! Have you been to Syria, to the Jews, or to the Bohemians, to study sorcery and magic?"

"No, my poor friend ; but to-morrow, without doubt, you will be killed during the expedition ; and then your pistols will adorn my berth ;" and Clinchard smiled.

"I hope sincerely not to fall to-morrow into the power of the Arabs. I have faith in the future—you will not have my pistols ; for, if I am killed, you will share my fate ; then the weapons which have given rise to these prophetic pleasantries will fall into the hands of the first cabin-boy who will take the trouble to pick them up."

Clinchard went away. He had jested ; but the events of the following day confirmed the predictions of the preceding evening.

At midnight, after having finished my watch, I retired to bed, rejoicing in the idea of going on shore the following day, and of our military march into the interior of the country.

The 12th, at four o'clock in the morning, M. Roland de Chabert, captain of the Loiret, Doctor Clinchard, M. Bravais, and myself, with forty of the crew of the vessel, went on shore, and found on the quay, Captain Reveroni, the commanding officer of Arzew. He communicated to us the order of General Létang, to suspend the expedition until he had sent us fresh reinforcements.

As we had arranged every thing on board for the campaign, on which we had reckoned passing the day, we determined to profit by our preparations, and to make use of our landing.

The officers proposed going to collect the balls which the gunners had thrown during the practice

of the preceding day. The captain having granted our request, I went to consult the commandant of the place, Mons. Reveroni, upon the seasonableness of the project, and upon the danger there was in advancing into the plain, who approved very much of our resolution, and assured us there was no danger in passing the advanced posts—still, not to go too far from them.

We took leave of M. Reveroni, and advanced into the plain. Arrived at about one hundred fathoms from the advanced posts, we stopped. We placed part of our men upon an eminence, to give us the signal, in case of a surprise by the Arabs. This precaution taken, I busied myself, with the rest of the sailors, in searching for the balls, and measuring the range of our guns.

I was about two musquets' shot distant from the rest of the troop, with the captain of the ship, Doctor Clinchard, and two sailors, engaged in calculating the distance our projectiles had cast, when I perceived a partridge, a few paces from me. (I wish to acknowledge every thing, at the risk of incurring blame for the levity of my character and the fickleness of my disposition.) I hastened to show it to Clinchard, and to run after it, taking aim.

I had scarcely advanced a few steps, when a troop of Arabs, issuing suddenly from the bottom of a ravine, from whence they watched a favourable opportunity of attacking our advanced posts, and carrying off the droves of cattle from the village of Arzew, pounced upon us with slackened rein,

and surrounded us on all sides. Three horsemen advanced towards me, crying *semi! semi!* (friends) and those that followed them uttered the same shouts. Trusting to the favourable disposition of these Arabs, I turned towards the Doctor, to make him comprehend what they said, when one of the two made a movement to obtain possession of the musquet which I held in my hand. Then comprehending the hostile intentions which the horsemen wished to conceal under the appearance of friendship, I withdrew my musquet, placed it to my shoulder, aimed at the Arab who had sought to disarm me, and struck him with a ball, which broke his shoulder. He let his gun, still loaded, fall to the ground; he tottered, and was obliged, in order to prevent falling, to clasp the neck of his horse. I sprang to seize the gun, but two Arabs directed theirs at my head; I turned to avoid the shot; a ball wounded me slightly in the head, another passed through my shirt and glanced along my breast.

I had not lost sight of the gun of the wounded man, and stooped down again to pick it up, when, feeling something rough slipping over my face, I placed my hands to it, and seized a cord, which surrounded my neck.* At the same time a violent shock threw me to the ground, and an Arab, who

* These cords are twenty feet long: one of the ends is furnished with a noose, which serves to make a running knot; the other with an iron hook. The Arabs use them for dragging from the field of battle the bodies of their brethren whom they wish to inter; and also to make prisoners, whose heads they cut off the moment they are beyond their enemies' reach.

had attached the end of this cord to his saddle-bow, spurred his horse and dragged me off at full gallop.

It was in vain to cry and beg for mercy: the Arab continued his rapid pace, dragging me, half strangled, over the rocks and brambles. This horrible punishment lasted for some minutes. At last the horse, compelled to mount a steep hillock, slackened his pace, and I succeeded, not without difficulty, in raising myself. Then, stunned by the rude shock, my hands and face bruised and bloody, my legs torn, I know not how I still retained sufficient strength to seize the cord and to keep it up, so that it should not bear entirely on my neck; to run, to catch the horse, and hang on its tail. But as soon as the other Arabs, put to flight by the sailors who had hurried to our assistance, had rejoined us, they began to overwhelm me with insults, and tore my dress to rags. A single instant sufficed to strip me almost entirely. They only left me a bad pair of summer trousers and boots, which the flints and brambles, over which I had been just dragged, had worn into holes. They had perceived our misfortune on board the brig, and commenced firing at the Arabs, but each shot cost me numberless blows; and the horse to which I was attached, alarmed at the noise of the cannon, suddenly darting forward impetuously, I fell to the ground. The Arabs hurried after, striking me; and if, after great difficulty, I had succeeded in raising myself, my merciless executioner, who soon perceived it, recommenced

galloping furiously, casting at me, at the same time, a look of contempt.

The incessant galloping of the horse, the violent shocks of the cord, which caused me to roll in the midst of the brambles and stones, upon which I left a bloody track, the reproaches and blows of the Arabs—all this lasted a quarter of an hour: a quarter of an hour is very short; yes, still, I can assure you, this quarter of an hour was very long.

When the Arabs considered the distance they had just passed sufficiently great to have no longer cause to dread the pursuit of the sailors, they stopped to cut off my head. They loosed the cord from my neck, they tied my hands behind my back, and I was bound to a dwarf palm.

I was so much overcome by fatigue, I sank to the ground, and awaited death with indifference. I knew the fate reserved for all the prisoners of the Arabs, and I had bid adieu to life in falling into their hands. I had but one sorrowful thought, and that was quickly driven away, either by the expectation of death, or by the passionate scene in which I was, although bound and silent, the principal actor—I thought of my family, of my sister, and said to myself, “What grief, on hearing of this event! As for me, it is finished; my accounts are squared.—My poor sister!”

A violent dispute arose among the Arabs. They flourished their sabres over my head, and disputed for the pleasure of cutting it off. They cried all at once, “It is I—it is I who took him; I ought

to cut off his head!" and each, to prove the truth of his assertion, showed a slip of my shirt or my coat. Many of them aimed at their companions, exclaiming, "It is for me to cut off his head; I kill you if you do not allow me my right!" At this moment an Arab arrived at full gallop, in the midst of the group, and threw upon my knees the head of the unfortunate Jonquié, one of our sailors; as if to add, by the sight of this frightful trophy, to the terror which I ought to feel, and to announce to me the treatment I had to expect. As I turned my eyes, in disgust, from this head, bloody and horribly mutilated, I perceived the Arab whom I had wounded, stretched upon the earth, about fifty paces from me. He raised himself with difficulty, and sought to aim at me with a pistol he held in his left hand; but the horsemen, in the heat of their discussion, passed and repassed before the patient, who allowed his hand to drop, waiting a favourable opportunity to aim at me. I saw his manœuvre, but it caused me little dread, and I said to myself, "If I am to die, it will not be this fellow, who aims at me with his left hand, who will lodge a ball in my body."

I awaited, however, with impatience, the conclusion of this terrible discussion, and the yataghan which was to sever my head from my body, when the arrival of another horseman changed the resolution of the Arabs.

Adda, the spy of Abd-el-Kader, had often come to see us at Arzew. He called himself our friend, and wished to establish himself as such. To drive

away the suspicions which his frequent visits might cause, he assured us it was merely for the purpose of selecting a favourable position, in order to establish himself and his tribe. Delighted by the good disposition which seemed to animate him, we had often invited him to dinner ; but the traitor had other designs. He remarked, in passing our lines, the spots where our cattle fed, which he wished to carry off ; and it was for this design that he had concealed himself in the ravine with his troop, which had surprised us and made me prisoner. Adda, seeing these enraged beings disputing about my life, called out, "Do not kill him ! He is an officer : Abd-el-Kader will pay us much better for his body than for his head ; and will replace, if we take him alive, the three horses we have lost." The Arabs, in reply, continued to brandish their sabres over my head, and to take aim at me, uttering, at the same time, horrible imprecations against the dog of a Christian.

Adda gave fresh explanations, and when they had succeeded in removing the Arab I had wounded (the unfortunate man died next day), his proposition was accepted. They decided that they would take me alive to Abd-el-Kader, and that they would leave the choice of my punishment to the Sultan, after he had paid my ransom and restored the horses our men had killed.

Immediately after the adoption of Adda's advice, the Arabs loosed me from the palm tree. They passed a cord through that which already bound my hands, two men took each an end, they placed

me in the middle of the troop, and we commenced our march for Old Arzew.

If Adda saved my life, it is not to the goodness of his heart, or to the generosity of his feelings, that I am indebted for such a benefit, but to his cupidity. Generosity, gratitude, friendship, are words which sound in vain in the ears of an Arab. They have but one passion—that of money; and for a few pieces of gold these miserable beings would deliver up their father and their mother.

After a march of two hours, during which the Arabs allowed me to take a little rest, we arrived at Old Arzew, where we stopped a few minutes to refresh the escort and the horses. I was weakened by fatigue; the wounds which covered my hands and legs pained me cruelly; I was naked, covered with perspiration and dust, tormented by a burning thirst; I stretched myself on the ground, despairing, and cursing my fate. I believed I could proceed no further, and thought that my body would remain without burial in the enclosure of Old Arzew, while my head would go to adorn, for one day, the tent of Abd-el-Kader. But I will ask permission of my reader to tell him what became of my companions, whilst I was penetrating the interior of the country in company with the Arabs.

The captain of the brig, M. Roland de Chabert, after having killed one Arab and mortally wounded another, had received a ball in his side, a second had carried away two fingers from his hand; he had his head laid open with the blow of a yataghan, and would certainly have been carried off, if the

sailors had not rescued him from the hands of the Arabs. Adda had recognised, from his ambuscade, the doctor, Clinchard; he immediately pointed him out to his companions, recommending them to take him alive, in order to lead him to Abd-el-Kader, to attend to their sick and wounded. They therefore surrounded the doctor, contenting themselves with knocking him down with sticks; but Clinchard, little and active, slipping under the horses and leaping over the brambles, succeeded in rejoining our sailors, after having killed one Arab and avoiding three times the fatal slip-knot, into which I, alas! had so well introduced my head.

The captain remained a long time between life and death; at last his strength returned by degrees, his wounds cicatrised, and he no longer ran any danger of his life.

Clinchard suffered a prodigious swelling, which disappeared by degrees, and fifteen days afterwards he suffered no other inconvenience from our misadventure than the sorrow my fate caused him.

I have said the Arabs brought me the head of the unfortunate Jonquiè.

They had left behind them an unfortunate boat-swain, stretched among the brambles, pierced with wounds. Each Arab, as he passed, gave him a cut with his sabre. Our soldiers carried him away, after having swept the enemy from the plain, but he expired on reaching the barge.

I shall not finish the recital of the attack of the Arabs without making mention of the bravery, the *sang froid*, and ability of my colleague, Lieutenant

Bravais. This courageous friend commanded the sailors who flew to our assistance. He disposed his troops so well, and charged so vigorously upon the Arabs, that he compelled them to take to flight in a *clin-d'-œil*; and if boldness and intrepidity could have saved me, *certes*, the boldness and intrepidity of Bravais would have assured my deliverance.

CHAPTER II.

ARRIVAL AT OLD ARZEW.—DETESTABLE REPAST.—THE HEAD OF A DEAD MAN.—BAD TREATMENT.—I AM DRIVEN FROM THREE WELLS.—ARRIVAL AT THE TRIBE OF BORGIA.—REPAST.—NIGHT.—MARCH.—THE DEAD MAN'S HEAD AGAIN.—ARRIVAL AT THE CAMP OF ABD-EL-KADER.

As I was in the advanced guard of the Arabs, I was one of the first to arrive at Old Arzew. Stretched upon the earth, at some paces from a fountain, I saw the troop which had attacked us defile past me; I counted two hundred horsemen. We made a halt of a quarter of an hour, during which time the men allowed their horses to drink, and took themselves something to eat. They brought me some figs,* and presented to me, in the leaf of a fig tree, some flour from oak acorns diluted with water; but, fatigued as I was, I was satisfied with drinking and chewing a few figs: I could never bring myself to swallow that oak-acorn flour. I had scarcely begun to enjoy some repose, when the voice of the chief gave the signal for departure, and I commenced my march escorted by twenty-seven horsemen. The remainder of the troop remained at Old Arzew,† to prepare a fresh attack against

* The Europeans call these figs Barbary figs, and the Arabs call them European figs.

† Old Arzew is a small town, situated upon a hill, a quarter

our advanced posts, and to carry off our cattle.

At the moment we were on the point of starting, an Arab approached me with a straw hat in his hand: the head of Jonquiè was in the hat. He ordered me to carry this hideous burthen: I refused. His comrades ran to the spot; they overwhelmed me with blows and insults, and exclaimed,

“Dog of a Christian, you shall carry the head.”

“No, I will not carry it.”

“You shall carry it,” replied the Arabs, redoubling their blows.

“You shall kill me sooner: I will not carry it. In fact, I suffer too much already; I will go no further: kill me at once.” *

With these words I laid myself down on the ground. It was my only means of obtaining any thing from these worthless beings: I had only to threaten not to proceed any further, and entreat them to kill me, to succeed in obtaining some concessions. Still I foresaw the moment when, furious at not being able to conquer my obstinacy, they would kill me on the spot. Fortunately, Adda, and several horsemen who marched in the front, retraced their steps, at the noise of this scene. I was always desirous of being near Adda, or of making my voice reach him, as he understood perfectly well what I said, and intended

of an hour's march from the sea. Since the French have fixed an establishment at this port, four years ago, the Arabs have abandoned the town. There is nothing remaining except a few bare walls and a few huts in ruins. Arzew is surrounded by many trees: there are still to be found some stones covered with Latin inscriptions, almost illegible, and the ruins of an aqueduct.

to deliver me alive to Abd-el-Kader, to obtain a horse in the place of the one he had lost; he never failed to run to the spot as soon as my life was threatened.

Adda and his horsemen, having informed themselves of the cause of our quarrel, and judging from my firmness that my resolution was immovable, ended by calming the irritation of their comrades, and causing the head of Jonquiè, which had been placed before me, to be taken away. An Arab fixed it to his saddle bow, and then, after having suffered several blows of a stick, which the Arabs applied to my shoulders, as if to make me pay for their disappointment, we left the ruins of Old Arzew, and directed our course across the plain.

In traversing the plain of Macta, we found three wells. Several Arabs of the neighbouring tribes came to meet us; they drew water and gave it to the horsemen and horses. I approached the first well, to drink like the rest, although the water was bad and brackish, but the Arab who held the bucket spat in my face, crying,

“This water is not for a dog of a Christian like thee!” I was tempted to strike the fool, but I quickly changed my intention, and did well, for I should have been killed on the spot. I was a prisoner, and compelled to endure the bad treatment and insults of my masters without murmuring. I did not reply, but went to the second well.

But the Arab who drew the water spat in my face, and apostrophised me in the same manner as his comrade.

“This water is not for a dog of a Christian like thee !”

I armed myself with patience, and proceeded to the third well ; here the Arab was not contented with spitting in my face, and addressing to me the same compliment as his companions ; he threw the bucketful of water in my face. I was covered with perspiration ; a doctor would have predicted an inflammation of the chest as the consequence ; but, as I had not time to be ill, and nurse such an indisposition, I escaped with a few shivers and an attack of despair. Then, according to my plan, I sat down on the ground and exclaimed,

“You may kill me—I will not go another step—I die of thirst !” And, in truth I told no falsehood. My mouth and tongue were as dry as a piece of cork. I was burnt up with ardent thirst. Then the Kait of the tribe of Amiens and Adda went themselves to draw water from the fountain, and made me drink.

We recommenced our march. In the country we were traversing, the Arabs were reaping their barley : the horsemen cried out to them, “Come and see the dog of a Christian ;” and the Arabs quitted their labour, approached us, and spat in my face. When those who formed my escort discovered on the plain any individuals of their nation or tribe, some of the horsemen separated from us, and going about fifty paces off, cried out with all their strength—“Come and see the dog of a Christian.” They then returned at full gallop, flourished their guns in the air, and directing the

muzzle at my head. When they were about twenty paces distant, they took aim at me; then, turning the weapon a little on one side, suddenly pulled the trigger. As I was not yet accustomed to this singular manœuvre, and as my sensations were not as yet completely extinguished by my sufferings, I avow that these cruel pleasantries made me suffer lively anguish; I allow that I shuddered as I heard the balls whistling past my ears. It was merely to celebrate their victory, and to express their joy, that they made these demonstrations: I knew it well, but I said to myself, "These barbarians are quite capable of killing you in the excess of their delight. It would be ill luck to receive in the head a bullet, fired in sign of rejoicing, and which was not intended for you, after having escaped those fired in earnest." So in France; they obtain a victory, they light glass lamps, and all is over—by the grace of God!

I ended, however, in becoming so accustomed to this exercise, that, at the close of my captivity, I saw Arabs, when they set out from the camp, take aim at me, and discharge their pieces, without experiencing the least fear or the slightest emotion.

We crossed several rivers that day. I was overcome with fatigue, covered with perspiration, and scorching dust; I was dying of thirst, and the wretches who surrounded me struck me when I stopped to drink. We forded the rivers; I had the water often as high as my waist, and still the torturers would not allow me to collect a little in the hollow of my hand. Then, deaf to their

menaces, and insensible to the blows of the stick and the butt end of their guns, I allowed myself to sink, as if exhausted by fatigue, to the bed of the river ; I laid myself down in the water, and drank long draughts. I raised myself more active, but soon fatigue and heat reawakened the desire to drink ; and, at each river we passed, I had to repeat the same manœuvre.

However, my strength was becoming exhausted : it was three o'clock ; I had been walking since five in the morning, my feet were torn with the stones, and I had the greatest difficulty in the world in following the Arabs, who were on horseback. At last I fell in the middle of the road, worn out with weariness. They picked me up and placed me on a horse ; a quarter of an hour afterwards the owner of the horse made me dismount, by drawing me off by the legs. I walked for two hours longer ; they then made me remount, and, at the close of night, after a march of twelve hours, we arrived at the tribe of the Borgia.

On our arrival, I was immediately exposed to the insults, the blows, the saliva, of men, women, and children. The Kait of this tribe had the tent pitched in which we were to pass the night. I was only half admitted into it ; they made me lie on the ground beyond the carpet.

The Arabs of the tribe of Borgia brought the horsemen of our escort some boiled fowls, with couscoussou for their supper, which was quickly devoured. I watched them from my corner, and certainly I could have eaten a piece with great

pleasure ; but they considered me unworthy to eat meat. They cast towards me, with disdain, into a bason that was near me, a handful of couscoussou.* It was the first time I had ever found myself before so miserable a dish for my dinner. I diluted these balls in the water, but I could not succeed in eating them, I found them so insipid, and my throat was so dry with the fatigue of the day.

When the Arabs had finished their repast, they made me give up my shirt ; and, in order to guard against any attempt at escape during the night, they placed my feet in irons. Fatigue had so swollen them, that the negro who had charge of the operation, had the greatest difficulty in making them enter the rings, which he was obliged to force by squeezing my legs, in order to fasten them with the padlock. I suffered much ; and, the operation being finished, at the sight of my irons the tears came into my eyes. Yes, I wept, on seeing myself enchained, like a wild beast, by a barbarous and

* Couscoussou. They are balls of flour, with which the Arabs surround the boiled fowls, or any other meat, as we garnish a leg of mutton with French beans, or a fowl with rice. The Arab holds a sieve, in which the flour is placed, and moves it gently, whilst another Arab throws water on the flour. Little balls are soon formed, which the women form into a round shape as soon as they are sufficiently large ; when this operation is finished, they throw the balls into an earthen pot, the bottom of which is pierced with holes. The Arabs place this pot over an earthen kettle, filled with water, which they cause to boil, and wait until the steam has cooked them before they remove them ; they then place them over the poultry, and moisten them with some meat soup and milk, highly spiced. When the couscoussou and poultry are good, it forms an excellent dish : this time it was very bad.

useless precaution. Alas ! they saw very well that I could not think of escape, for I could not even support myself upon my legs. My guard had not allowed me to lie down on the border of the carpet. I stretched myself on the ground, I arranged my feet so that the iron should pain me as little as possible, and fell profoundly asleep. I was so broken by fatigue, that I did not awaken before the morning, when the negro came to free me from my irons. The foolish fellow, without giving me notice, shook abruptly the rings which surrounded my feet, and this movement caused so sharp a pain, that if I had had any weapon I should not have given him time to call for help. I wished to raise myself, but I fell back immediately upon the ground. My feet were swollen and lacerated ; the wounds which covered my legs and hands, after the repose of the night and the cold of the morning, shot sharp and acute pains through all my body. The Arabs felt pity at my condition ; they saw that if they forced me to march a few minutes, they would be compelled to leave me expiring in the middle of the road. They decided upon giving me a horse, and we set off for the camp of Abd-el-Kader, from which we were about ten leagues distant. But, actuated as they always are, by a feeling of cruelty, and as if to idemnify themselves for being obliged to give me a horse, the Arabs hung to my saddle bow the head of the unfortunate Jonquiè. It sent forth a fetid odour. The barbarians soon perceived the repugnance that I felt to these horrid remains, and the frightful nausea

that these exhalations caused me, and immediately they began to pierce, with the points of their sabres, these shreds of human flesh, and to dig out the skull with their yataghans, to hasten the complete putrefaction, by exposing the brain to the action of the sun and air.

We completed the distance between Mascara and Monstaganem, and I experienced a secret pleasure, on perceiving the marks which the wheels of our cannons had made on the road. I followed them with the greatest attention; they recalled to mind our soldiers—my country. I was in hopes we might perhaps be surprised by our troops, that we might be about to fall upon some advanced post of the French, and I forgot all my sufferings, the putrid and bloody head which hung at the bow of my saddle, the insults, the irons, the bad treatment. I saw the French—I heard the shouts of my liberators—I fancied myself on board the brig—I embraced my friends, my relations. Whilst I was pursuing these brilliant dreams; whilst my imagination, in delirium, presented to my eyes pictures of happiness; at the moment that I fancied myself free, at the command of the battery thundering upon the Arabs—alas! my delightful illusions speedily vanished, scattered by the blows of the sticks and gunstocks, which the Arabs applied to my back every moment. If my horse slackened his pace, they struck me; if I applied my heel to the horse to hasten his progress, they beat me again; exclaiming,—A dog of a Christian like thee has no right to beat the horse of an Arab.”

“Robbers,” said I, “if ever I have the power of revenging myself! How then am I to hurry my horse? if he does not proceed, you strike me; if I press his sides you strike me again. Brutes! savages! There is no means, with the best will in the world, of coming to an understanding and living quietly with you.” We marched thus during six hours, before reaching the camp of Abd-el-Kader. At last the Arabs uttered shouts of joy, and Adda informed me that we had arrived at the camp, situated *aux environs* of the town of Kaala,* which we had just discovered. I immediately felt my hopes sink in my heart, and it was not without feeling a lively anxiety, that I passed the first tents of the camp of the man who was about to decide upon my fate.

* El Kaala is a very pretty little town, situated in a well-wooded and cool ravine, at the foot of the mountains. It is overlooked on all sides by high mountains; it is surrounded by very pretty gardens, and numerous springs preserve a luxuriant vegetation. The town is protected by a fort, fortified with three pieces of cannon. The principal inhabitants are Courrouglis; they manufacture a large quantity of carpets. This town should contain twelve hundred inhabitants. The trees are very handsome, and the water excellent.

CHAPTER III.

THE CAMP OF ABD-EL-KADER.—THE CHAOUS.—MY PRESENTATION TO THE SULTAN.—DESCRIPTION OF HIS TENT.—PORTRAIT OF ABD-EL-KADER.—CONVERSATION.—HE CAUSES ME TO BE CLOTHED.—M. MEURICE.—RUINOUS CONDITION OF THE CAMP.—THE TROOPS OF ABD-EL-KADER.—HIS OFFICERS.

THE camp of Abd-el-Kader was situated in a wood of fig trees, upon the road itself from Moustaganem to Mascara: the wheel-ruts are still perfectly distinguishable which the cannons of the French had made at the time of their last passage. As soon as we arrived at the first tent, my guides made me dismount, and we were immediately surrounded by thousands of Arabs—men, women,* and children—who began to make the air resound with their confused clamours. I distinguished, from time to time,—“Son of a dog!—Dog of a Christian!—Cut off his head!”—the whole accompanied with blows and the customary spitting. However, the Chaous† came to my assistance. They drove away these savages with blows of their sticks, and

* The women belonged to the neighbouring tribes, and had collected on the news of my arrival. There are none in the camp of Abd-el-Kader.

† Chaous are the executioners. They have the rank of officers, and eat with Abd-el-Kader. They are richly clad, and generally carry superb yataghans and magnificent pistols, ornamented with pearls and coral, suspended to a gilded belt. They

succeeded, with great difficulty, in rescuing me from their hands, and conducting me to the tent of Abd-el-Kader, by making a rampart for me with their bodies.

This brutal reception was not such as to reassure me. Moreover, I experienced a certain dread in entering the tent; but Abd-el-Kader, without doubt perceiving my fear, by the paleness of my countenance, made me a sign, with a smile, to be seated, and said to me, "As long as you remain near me, you have neither to dread bad treatment nor insults." Emboldened by this kind reception, I asked him for water. I had not drunk since the preceding evening—thanks to the horsemen of my escort. Abd-el-Kader had me immediately conducted to the tent which served as a magazine for provisions, where they gave me a melon, some grapes, some *white bread*, and some water. I experienced at this moment sensations and feelings I had never expected to feel again. The kind reception of Abd-el-Kader, the assurance he had hastened to give me, altogether raised my sunken courage, and re-awakened in my spirit smiling and flattering hopes. The melon was excellent, and the water fresh. I devoured the melon, and emptied a pitcher of water.

My repast being finished, I was reconducted to the tent of Abd-el-Kader. This tent is the most magnificent of the whole camp. It is thirty feet

have always a stick (baton) in their hand, of which they make constant use; for they have more blows to give than heads to cut off.

long and eleven feet high. It is furnished in the interior with cloth of various colours, upon which, in the midst of *arabesque* and crescents, yellow, red, blue, green, hang weepers, similar in their form to those which decorate, with us, the mortuary cloths. A woollen curtain (*haick*) divides it into two unequal parts; in the hinder part, which is the smallest, is a mattrass, destined for the siesta, or sleep, of the Sultan. A small door, which opens to the back, serves as a passage for those in waiting in the tent, and to the slaves more particularly attached to the person of Abd-el-Kader. Ben-About and Ben-Faka, of whom we shall soon speak, have the charge of watching over him when he goes out by this door, and to present water to him for his ablutions. During the day, the two curtains, which close at night the front of the tent, rest attached to two long rods: the interior is thus open to all eyes, and accessible to all comers.

In one of the corners, on the ground, are rolled four flags, which four horsemen always carry before Abd-el-Kader when he is on a march. They are of silk: the first, the banner of the cavalry, is red; the second, the banner of the infantry, has a yellow stripe between two horizontal blue stripes; the third, two horizontal stripes, the one green, the other white; the fourth is half yellow, half red. On Friday, the day of rest for the Arabs, they are exposed before the tent of the Sultan.

Thirty negro slaves, who form the body-guard of Abd-el-Kader, surround his tent. They are

never relieved, and have no other bed than the earth. A great number of chaous are always in attendance at the entrance, waiting the orders of their master.

In the interior is an elevated stool, covered with red silk, of which Abd-el-Kader makes use in mounting his horse. There is also a small matrass, covered with a carpet, upon which are two cushions of red silk. A chest is placed at each end of the matrass, two other chests form the back, and a carpet covers the whole. All this forms the sofa of Abd-el-Kader. The boxes enclose his money and his clothes. A carpet, upon which strangers seat themselves, is spread upon the ground.

I have now mentioned all the furniture and all the ornaments of the tent of Abd-el-Kader. I must describe the life, the character, the manners, the habits of this man, so badly known even to this day. After all I had heard said of him, I expected to see a barbarian, always ready to cut off heads—a tiger, thirsty for blood : my expectation was much deceived.

Abd-el-Kader is 28 years of age. He is little, being not more than five feet high ; his face long, and of excessive paleness ; his large black eyes are mild and caressing ; his mouth small and graceful ; his nose aquiline. His beard is thin, but very black. He wears a small moustache, which gives his features, naturally fine and benevolent, a martial air, which becomes him exceedingly. The *ensemble* of his physiognomy is sweet and agreeable. Mons.

Bravais has told me that an Arab chief, whose name I have forgotten, being one day on board the "Loiret," in the captain's state-room, exclaimed, on seeing the portrait of a woman, Isabeau de Baviere, whom the engraver had taken to personify Europe, "There is Abd-el-Kader!" Abd-el-Kader has beautiful small hands and feet, and displays some coquetry in keeping them in order. He is always washing them. While conversing, squatted upon his cushions, he holds his toes in his fingers, or, if this posture fatigues him, he begins to pare, to clear the bottom of the nails with a knife and scissors, of which the mother-of-pearl handle is delicately worked, and which he has constantly in his hands.

He affects an extreme simplicity in his dress. There is never any gold or broidery upon his bernous.* He wears a shirt of very fine linen, the seams of which are covered with a silken stripe. Next to his shirt comes the haick.† He throws over the haick two bernous of white wool, and upon the two white bernous a black one. A few silken tassels are the only ornaments which relieve the simplicity of his costume. He never carries any arms at his girdle.‡ His feet are naked in his

* Bernous, a kind of woollen mantle, without sleeves, but with a hood to it.

† Haick, a covering of very thin wool, with which they wrap their bodies and their heads.

‡ I have seen at the print-sellers' shops a portrait of Abd-el-Kader—the face of Blue Beard—pistols and poignards in his belt. Abd-el-Kader in his camp never wears arms. They say also that he has very bad teeth; I never perceived it.

slippers. He has his head shaved, and his head-dress is composed of two or three Greek caps, the one upon the other, over which he throws the hood of his bernou.

The father of Abd-el-Kader, who has been dead two years, was a marabout,* named Mahidin, who, by his good fortune, his intelligence, his reputation for holiness, had obtained a great repute among the Arabs, and a great moral influence over the tribes. He had performed the journey to Mecca twice; he had twice prostrated himself before the tomb of the prophet. His son accompanied him on his second trip; he was then eight years of age. His youth did not prevent his seeing, observing, and profiting: he already knew how to write and read Arabic, and had also learned Italian. On their return from this pious expedition, Mahidin guided the youthful intelligence of his son in the difficult study of the Koran, at the same time that he instructed him in the practical part of business.

The taking of Algiers occurred. As soon as we had concluded a peace with the Arabs, Abd-el-Kader laboured to excite the tribes, to nourish and envenom their resentments, to exalt their religious fanaticism, and, above all, to become their chief. The intelligence, the activity, the bravery, the address, the craft of the young marabout soon distinguished him among the tribes. The Arabs re-

† Marabout, priest. Such as have performed the journey to Mecca are called holy (l'hadj).

cognised the superiority that natural advantages assured him over them; they became accustomed by degrees to consider him their chief: to-day he is their sultan. He is the only man capable of maintaining the Arabs against our attacks. If the tribes should lose him, discouraged as they already are, and tired of the war, they would soon place themselves under our rule.*

When I was introduced the second time into the tent of the sultan, he was seated upon some pillows; his secretaries and some marabouts, squatted down in a circle, were near him. His smiling and gracious countenance formed a pleasing contrast with their stern and savage faces. The chief secretary first drew my attention. His physiognomy was perfectly Tartuffian—he is a rogue; he always urged Abd-el-Kader, to demand a large sum of money for my ransom.

The sultan ordered me, with a smile full of kindness, to be seated, and said to me in Arabic,†

“Where were you taken?”

“At Arzew.”

“Your name?”

“France.”

“Oh, yes; Français.”

* I forgot to say that the name Abd-el-Kader is the baptismal name. The Sultan is called Sidi-l’Hadj Abd-el-Kader Mahidin; in French, Monsieur le Saint Abd-el-Kader Mahidin. This last is the family name. He is called holy, because he has been to Mecca.

† Abd-el-Kader can speak a little French; but from pride, or to humour the susceptibility and the fanaticism of the Arabs, he never would speak *christian* with a Christian.

"Yes, I am a Frenchman ; but that is not what I wish to say : I am called France."

"Yes, Français?"

"No, France ; as if, for example, you were named Mascara, Algiers, Oran, Mohammed Ali, Abd-el-Kader."

"France?"

"Yes."*

"Your rank?"

"Frigate-lieutenant."†

"Captain?"

"No, frigate-lieutenant."

"They told me you were captain. Explain to me what you were on board your ship."

"On board of a ship there is a captain ; afterwards a lieutenant, second in command ; then frigate-lieutenants, of whom I am one ; then come the masters, the quarter-masters, the sailors, the apprentices, the cabin-boys ; these last are but children."

"I understand—lieutenant ; you are the third on board the ship?"

"Yes."

"Fear nothing : as long as you are near me you will not be exposed to any bad treatment."

* This short explanation showed me how much Abd-el-Kader's intelligence was superior to that of the other Arabs. He immediately comprehended that my family name was France, and he pronounced it very well ; while the other Arabs have always believed I had no name, and constantly called me Français.

† At this time we were still styled so ; since then, a new regulation gives us the title of Lieutenant.

He conversed with me a long time on the generals who had commanded in Africa, and he inquired, with a good deal of interest and curiosity, what had become of them. At the name of General Trézel he became violently angry, and exclaimed, "He is the author of all our evils! He is the man who, by breaking the peace, has caused so many disasters!"

I understood him to make allusion to the battle of Tafna, where General Bugeaud retrieved the check we had received at Macta, which had cost us five hundred men.

"How many horsemen," said I to him, "did you lose at Tafna?"

"How many?" replied he with anger, "How many? What have you to do with that? The Arab has not been killed like the French at Macta. You have not retrieved the great victory I gained over you. Five hundred of our men never returned from Tafna."* I took care not to add any observation. There was a moment's silence, after which he smiled and said, "Have you need of any thing else to-day?"

"I am quite naked; have me clad."

Abd-el-Kader immediately gave orders for them to dress me. I retired, on a sign to that effect, and they conducted me to the magazine of provisions. There they supplied me with a cap, a very

† As the Arabs are the greatest liars in the world, we may say, without fear of being taxed with exaggeration, that General Bugeaud killed 1,200 men at Tafna.

light haïck, a shirt, and slippers. They restored me my trousers, and I put them on, although in rags, for there were none to be found in the magazine.

During the journey, the horsemen had told me that I should find several French prisoners in the camp of Abd-el-Kader. While dressing myself, I asked an Arab where the prisoners were.

I had scarcely finished the question, when I saw appear before me, like a phantom, a man of a pale and meagre countenance, with a long untrimmed beard; the breast uncovered, the legs lank and dirty, enveloped in a wretched haïck. He bore the marks of long suffering and of dreadful misery.

“You do not recollect me, Monsieur?” and a smile lighted up his dull and haggard face.

“No, Monsieur; I do not believe I have ever seen you before.”

“Oh, it is because I have suffered so much since our meeting. I am Mons. Meurice. I had heard you had been made prisoner: I am very sorry for you; for you know not all the bad treatment, all the tortures that await you. But as for myself, I cannot conceal the pleasure that your presence causes me. I shall be no longer alone; there will be some one to share my fate: for, monsieur, we must suffer less (and I feel so already, on seeing you) when we have a companion, with whom we can converse of our misfortunes, of our country—a companion to whom we can tell our griefs with tears. You do not know me then, Mons. de France?”

"No, Monsieur. Where can I have seen you? On board? At Algiers?"

"At Algiers, at the house of Mons. Lafont, merchant, where we dined together."

"It is true; at Mons. Lafont's, at dinner! Mons. Meurice?"

"Yes, Monsieur."

This poor unfortunate man advanced towards me; tears glistened in his eyes; we warmly squeezed our hands. "You must have suffered cruelly; you are much changed. I perceive already all the wickedness of the Arabs, whose prisoners we are; but that will not last long. Take courage; we are two; Abd-el-Kader is good; we shall be exchanged."

"Yes, Abd-el-Kader is good; but his companions do not resemble him."

"We will ask his protection against them. Come, Monsieur Meurice, take courage."

"Oh, no Monsieur among poor prisoners!"

"*Eh bien!* No more Monsieur. Meurice, take courage; we shall not remain here. I have a good chance. I am a sailor: a sailor rarely dies on shore; it would be neither proper nor according to his habits. For the citizen, the burial-ground, near the church; for the soldier, the field of battle; for the sailor, a ball and the sea. Come, Meurice, courage, my friend."

"Your carelessness, your gaiety, do me good; I promise you not to allow myself to be cast down any more, if you always retain this delightful humour."

“By my faith, a good heart against bad fortune. You will soon recover your *en bon point*.”

In thus speaking, I was far from expressing the sorrowful reflections that the miserable appearance of Meurice caused me. On seeing his face, altered by suffering, the leanness of his body, the dejection of his spirits, the weakness of all his limbs, one would think he was a lost man. At Algiers, at the dinner of M. Lafont, he was strong and powerful. He was a man of forty years of age, fair complexioned, of an agreeable figure, of refined mind; amiable, but very sensitive. Bad treatment had reduced him to a deplorable condition. Suffering had stupified him; it had checked in him all activity and correctness of ideas, and disarranged his whole system; it had reduced him to a weak, credulous, imbecile being. It is necessary to say, that he had suffered unheard of tortures, which I escaped; that the fatigues and privations of a sailor's life had never hardened his frame; that no difficult situation had ever inured him to moral suffering.

“Tell me, Meurice, is this the camp of the Sultan?”

“Yes.”

“What a camp! *Mon Dieu!* What ruined tents! What soldiers!—wretches in tatters. What is the number of Abd-el-Kader's soldiers?”

“There are in the camp 250 horse and 500 foot soldiers, clad at his expense. The Califat (General-in-chief) is encamped with an equal number of

men at the outskirts of Tlemsen. It is with this handful of men that he drags all the neighbouring tribes to battle. The Arabs, as you perceive, place all their cavalry in the interior of the camp; the infantry surrounds and protects it."

"The tent in which we are is as large as that of Abd-el-Kader, but not so handsome. What is it used for?"

"It serves as a general magazine for the provisions and ammunition of Abd-el-Kader. That which you see down yonder serves for the Sultan's kitchen; it contains also the grain and couscoussou for the food of the troops. There is another, which contains all the necessaries of equipment and arms, also oil and butter."

"Who is the chief of our tent?"

"He is a negro, named Ben-Faka, son of Faka, an old slave of Abd-el-Kader's father. He saw the Sultan born, and has attended him during his childhood; he is much attached to him. He fulfils the duties assigned among us to the commissaries."

"Is he a good man?"

"So-so; one day good, the next bad."

"My friend, we must preserve the description of all these men, in order that if they ever fall into the power of the French, they may repay to the one with the blows of a cord, to the others with a few grains of lead, all their blows, insults, and odious vexations."

"Yes, quite right."

"And the name of the others?"

“Ben-About, an old teacher of Abd-el-Kader. He has the entire confidence of the Sultan. He keeps guard over the tent of the treasure, when his master goes to battle. He is the minister of finance. Ben-About and Ben-Faka watch over Abd-el-Kader, when he goes out of the small door of his tent.”

“The description of Ben-About?”

“Ben-About is easy to know. He stammers while speaking. A ball has carried off half his teeth and half his tongue.

“The General who commands the troops in the camp is named Milloud-Ben-Arrac. He is always grave and serious; he never laughs.

“He has for Lieutenant an Arab named Mouftar, who more particularly commands the cavalry. During the peace, Mouftar often came to Oran. He has seen the manœuvres of the French cavalry, and since then he has been anxious to discipline his horsemen, and to make them march in rank. All his efforts are useless. The Arabs do not understand how a regiment can charge at full gallop and maintain their line. It is to them a wonder—such a wonder as Mouftar will never succeed in making them execute.”

I conversed a few moments longer with Meurice upon the position and resources of Abd-el-Kader. I will mention all his observations in their proper place.

Meurice then made me relate how I had been captured, and what had happened to me since. My recital being finished, I entreated him to tell

me his adventures. He was about to commence, when they brought us some couscoussou for supper. It was growing dark ; a negro lighted a candle of yellow wax, almost as thin as a stable rat ; he fixed it upon a stick driven into the earth, and ordered us to go to rest.

We stretched ourselves upon the bare earth ; the negroes departed. Then by the feeble light of the candle Meurice raised himself, and with a slow and sorrowful accent, began the recital of his fatal adventure. I wish I was as able to manage the pen as I am to manage a vessel, to paint, in the midst of this semi-darkness, under a savage tent, encumbered with bales, the two prisoners, seated sorrowfully on the earth, and Meurice, with his pale and livid countenance, with his long beard and half-closed eyes, relating, in a low and mournful voice, the horrible event which had precipitated him from a happy condition into all that misery has, most frightful and brutalizing. There are things which we feel in a lively manner, but which we are not always able to express as warmly as we could wish. I sketch the principal features of this picture, and leave to the imagination of the reader to place on these lines the shadows and the colours.

CHAPTER IV.

HISTORY OF MONS. MEURICE.—ATTACK OF THE ARABS.—MASSACRE OF MADEMOISELLE D.—MONS. MULLER WOUNDED.—EXCHANGE.—BARBARITY OF THE WOMEN OF THE TRIBE OF THE HOULED CHERIFS.—CONSTERNATION OF ABD-EL-KADER, AFTER THE BATTLE OF TAFNA.—DISCOURAGEMENT OF THE ARABS.—PRISONERS SENT TO DROMA.—BRUTALITIES OF THIRTY NEGROES.—FOUR WOMEN.—RETURN TO THE CAMP OF ABD-EL-KADER.

“AFTER the Revolution of July, I suffered great losses, in consequence of some bad speculations. Compelled to leave Paris, I went to Algiers, to establish myself there with my wife. I employed myself in surveying. I was judge of the contentions which arose on the subject of land. I was well contented with my new position; I worked hard. The kindness of Clarissa, and the care she lavished upon me, contributed to render my exile less painful. She cast into the monotonous existence we led at Algiers, an interest, a liveliness, which made me delight in that life, so new and so strange to a man accustomed to the pleasures and distractions of a large city. Poor Clarissa! she is so good and so beautiful! I love her so sincerely! She writes to me often: we will read her letters together. Alas! perhaps I shall see her no more;” and the tears rolled down Meurice’s cheeks. He continued:—

“The 26th April, 1836, I went to visit an estate in the district of Mitidja. I was returning to Algiers with Mons. Muller, civil engineer, Mons. D——, and his sister. I was on horseback, Mons. Muller rode a mule, M. D—— and his sister were in a carriage. Suddenly a troop of Arabs surrounded us. We were without arms; Mons. D—— alone had his gun with him. He was the first to perceive the Arabs. Seized with fright, forgetting his friends, forgetting his sister, he opened the coach-door, sprang out, and, without even discharging his piece, fled as fast as he could, and threw himself into a neighbouring morass, where the horsemen could not reach him. In the precipitation and confusion of the attack, M. Muller received a ball in his thigh, which wounded him severely. I was made prisoner without striking a blow. The Arabs obtained possession also of Mademoiselle D——, and immediately endeavoured to satisfy upon her person their hideous brutality; but the noble girl resisted their frightful attempts with wonderful courage and constancy. Entreaties, threats, blows, loaded pistols and guns presented at her head—nothing was able to overcome her heroic resistance. Then, my dear De France, they massacred this poor girl before our eyes! and we could not defend her. She died resigned, her body torn by the yataghans, to appear before her God in all her innocence. Without uttering a cry, without a murmur, without asking for mercy—she died, with a glance towards us full of a sweet expression of

pity. She seemed to say to us—Adieu! I am more happy than you: my torments are ended. I go to the abodes of joy and eternal felicity. And whilst this virtuous girl was breathing forth her last sigh, in the most atrocious sufferings, her brother, who had with him a loaded gun, was concealed in the depths of the morass; and when the executioners had departed, after having completed their bloody murder, he regained in tranquillity the road to the city, and returned to his ordinary occupations!

“The Arabs dragged off M. Müller and me. M. Müller’s wound appeared so serious, that the Arabs, perceiving the impossibility of keeping him alive, if they compelled him to support the fatigues of the journey, determined to leave him with the Hadjoutés, where we soon arrived, and to await his restoration, in order to exchange him for some of their own tribe at Algiers. M. Müller remained with the Hadjoutés, and an exchange soon restored him to liberty. Three Arab prisoners paid his ransom.

“I was destined to be sold to Abd-el-Kader, and we set off for the camp of the Sultan. During the journey, there is no description of ill treatment which I did not endure. Menaces of death, insults, blows with the stick and stocks of their guns—I endured all these tortures. I will give you an idea of them. In a tribe on the plain, the Arabs bound me to a tree, quite naked, my hands tied behind my back; and there, during twenty-four hours, the women and children, after having daubed my

face with filth, amused themselves with throwing flints at me.

“Since then, the blows and the insults never ceased; but I never experienced so horrible a punishment. The horrid smell of the filth; the flints which every moment struck my head, my body, my legs; the children, who bit and pinched my thighs—I think it is impossible to suffer more.

“We arrived, after having remained some time at Mascara, at the camp of Abd-el-Kader, situated in the outskirts of Tafna.

“The Sultan received me with kindness, and purchased me. He was very sorrowful, and quite dejected; he had just lost the battle of Shikah, against General Bugeaud. Before the battle he had predicted the victory to his army, supporting his prophecy by a passage in the Koran, which announces the defeat of the Christians in the course of the seventh year of their establishment in Africa.

“This overthrow had destroyed all the influence he had acquired by falsehoods, and by exalting the religious fanaticism of the Arabs. These last had abandoned their Sultan, and disowned his authority. The tribes murmured, and many of them swore no longer to fight under his orders, taking charge of their own defence. The Arabs fled on all sides, and overthrew every thing on their passage. They did not even respect the camp of Abd-el-Kader, and in the dread that it would fall into the hands of the French, they went so

far as to cut off the half of his tent : they pillaged it of the provisions. It is to be regretted that, under those circumstances, we had not had a few more light cavalry ; for then, without doubt, we should have obtained possession of the camp of Abd-el-Kader.

“ The Sultan retreated, immediately after this defeat, to Mascara, with fifty horsemen and one hundred foot, inhabitants of that city, the only remains of his army. The report of a counter-march of General Bugeaud had spread terror ; the magazines of Abd-el-Kader were pillaged in the midst of the disorder and general confusion ; and certainly Abd-el-Kader would never have recovered the blow our troops had just given him, if it had not been for the subsidies of every description which Mouley-Abd-el-Rachamn, Emperor of Morocco, is continually sending him, and without which he could not support the smallest army.

“ The Sultan, seeing the Arabs who were the preceding evening subject to his orders shake off his authority and disown his power, wished to rescue the prisoners that were in the camp from a certain death. He gave them in charge to the thirty negroes who constantly watch around his tent, to conduct and escort to Droma ; M. Lanternier, a colonist of Algiers, his wife, about forty years of age, his daughter, a young lady of fifteen years of age, beautiful as an angel, a German woman of forty years of age, another German woman, taller and handsomer than Mademoiselle Lanternier ; all whom the Sultan recommended to the especial

care of his negroes, to protect them against the insults and aggression of the tribes we had to pass. We set off full of confidence in the negroes' promise, and penetrated with gratitude for the Sultan's generosity ; but scarcely were we five hundred paces distant from the camp than the negroes suddenly stopped. They seized M. Lanternier and myself, bound our hands behind our backs, and fastened us to a tree ; two negroes placed themselves by our sides, and placed the muzzles of their pistols at our breasts. The scene which followed defies description. They, at last, made me advance with Lanternier, and we continued our journey. Thus did the Arabs fulfil the orders of the powerful Sultan Abd-el-Kader. When we reached Droma,* they threw M. Lanternier and

† Droma. Droma is a small town, situated on a plain, at the foot of a mountain, five leagues from the frontiers of the empire of Morocco, and two leagues from the sea, which is visible from thence. The Arabs obtain from this city their earthenware, their woollen manufactures, their haicks, their bernous; but, since the occupation of Tlemsen by the French, and, consequently, from the emigration of a large number of the manufacturers, who have transported their families and industry to Droma, this last town has acquired a great importance; it is still, however, far from affording the Arabs an equivalent for the resources they had in Tlemsen. Droma manufactures 200 haicks per day, and Tlemsen manufactured 1000. The haicks are of three qualities: those of inferior quality are worth 5 francs; those of a second quality are worth 6 francs; and those of the best quality, 7 francs 50 centimes. It is a great market for wool: at Algiers wool is worth 20 francs the quintal (100lbs. weight). The foot of the mountain at which Droma is situated is covered with kermes: the kermes are worth 500 francs the quintal at Algiers. The neighbourhood is very fertile. The fruit trees, such as the cherry, apricot, fig, jujub, pomegranate,

myself into an infected prison, and the women into another.

“The 31st July, Abd-el-Kader, wishing to send some people to Algiers and to Oran, had me conducted from Droma to Mascara, and from that town to his camp. I found the same benevolent disposition in the Sultan as before. He renewed the assurance that no harm should be done me, and that I should be soon exchanged. He also persuaded me to write to my wife, and to request her to join me, and he accompanied this last proposition with the most solemn protestations. For a moment I was on the point of complying; but soon the recollection of my sufferings, and the dread of seeing Clarissa subject to menaces, insults, and blows, made me abandon the idea. The presence of Clarissa would have softened my torments and closed my wounds, but ought I to drag so dear a wife into the misery into which I was fallen, perhaps to kill her?

“I refused; but I thanked the Sultan for his generosity. He then informed me of the motive

olive, grow in great numbers, and produce excellent fruit. Animals are very cheap: a sheep sells for 2 francs, a cow for 20, and an ox for 30 francs.

After Abd-el-Kader's overthrow at Trara-Shika, the Kabails did not wish to permit a passage through their mountains to the empire of Morocco. The Arabs have no other means of communication with this country than through Droma. It is by this route that all the subsidies, which Mouley-Abd-el-Rachamn, Emperor of Morocco, sends Abd-el-Kader, reach him. The occupation of this place would infallibly lead to Abd-el-Kader's ruin.

he had for sending for me to the camp; he made me write after his dictation several letters, which he sent to Oran and Algiers.

“ I have only been in the camp of Abd-el-Kader fourteen days. I am better off here than in the prisons of Droma, and in the tents of the tribes. Abd-el-Kader restrains the hatred and fury of the Arabs against the Christians. Your presence here will throw some consolation in the midst of my misery. I am no longer alone, since my fate is now bound to yours; the good or the evil which will befall the one, the other will share. Two men are always more imposing to their enemies than a single one; and, moreover, you will perhaps easily obtain the favour of Abd-el-Kader. Then our fate will be changed. The governor will endeavour to ransom you; your deliverance will draw mine with it. If ever we recover our liberty, my friend, we will write the history of our captivity. I have already collected several notes, in this journal—and he showed me a small portfolio—you will assist me to complete them. Your observations, joined to mine, will not be without interest.

“ Now try to sleep; good night. If you feel cold, creep closer to me; we shall mutually warm each other. Good night.”

I pressed affectionately the hand of Meurice.

His recital had affected me; and, for a long time, the recollection of his sufferings caused a violent agitation of my spirits. At last a deep sleep drove away these mournful images.

CHAPTER V.

THE CAMP OF ABD-EL-KADER.—TENTS OF THE INFANTRY.—TENTS OF THE CAVALRY.—A PIECE OF CANNON.—OCCUPATION OF THE TROOPS.—MANŒUVRES.—HISTORY OF A DESERTER FROM A FOREIGN LEGION.—CAVALRY UNIFORM.—INFANTRY UNIFORM.—PRAYERS.—MUSIC.—CAFES.

WE were awakened early next morning by the unequal roll of a drum; we rose immediately, and passed the day in walking around the camp, in observing the customs, manners, and discipline of Abd-el-Kader's soldiers.

The camp is in the form of a circle; the tents of the infantry compose the boundary, those of the cavalry are in the centre. Each tent holds from fifteen to twenty men. The horses are fastened outside by the fore legs, by means of a cord, the two ends of which are attached to stakes driven in the ground. The tent of Abd-el-Kader is in the centre of the camp, and the whole space in the front of it is open, and destined for his horses and those of his followers particularly attached to his person. The boundaries of the camp are visible from the tent, and a piece of cannon, the mouth of which is directed towards the plain; it is in a very bad state. On my arrival it was mounted upon a French carriage, which was broken during

my stay: I know not how the Arabs have been able to repair it. The gunners who have the charge of firing it have their hands burnt and blackened with powder. The touch-hole is very large, and the matches have no handles; so that the powder, escaping through the touch-hole in a column of fire, inevitably wounds the Arab who discharges it. However, it only serves for salutes and rejoicings. The tent for the gunners is a few paces from the piece. Behind the tent of Abd-el-Kader is that of the muleteers. Here are the mules destined to transport the necessaries of the encampment. Near the tent which serves for a kitchen are encamped about a hundred camels, employed in carrying, during the excursions and journeys, the grain and biscuit* for the soldiers' food. By the side of the camels are enclosed a flock of sheep and goats.†

Each tent furnishes two men every night to watch over the camp. The first keeps guard from the beginning of the night until midnight; the second is not relieved until daybreak. The guard of the camp during the day is not confided to any one in particular. As soon as day appears, the drum beats, and the night guard retire. They distribute to the soldiers some miserable biscuit, filled with chaff and

* The biscuit is very bad, salt, and so hard, that it is necessary to soak it some time in water, to be able to eat it.

† Every Friday they distribute a sheep for each tent. Formerly they gave two; but since these successive defeats, Abd-el-Kader has been obliged to husband his resources and necessaries of every description.

earth, or some barley bread. The horsemen carry a bushel of barley to their horses. They only allow them to drink once during the day, at five o'clock in the afternoon. At four o'clock they serve some boiled barley to the soldiers, and some couscoussou to the chiefs.

The troops have nothing to do the whole day, except when their chiefs attempt, from time to time, to instruct them in the manœuvres and management of their fire-arms. The aga of the infantry follows the example of Mouftar, the lieutenant of the cavalry. A German deserter, from a foreign regiment, assisted in instructing the troops, but he has now retired from his office of instructor.

The history of this soldier is curious. For a year after his desertion he was an *attaché* to Abd-el-Kader, in capacity of officer-instructor of his infantry. In spite of the services he daily rendered the Arabs, in spite of his fidelity to his new master, he heard them saying every day, that in the first skirmish they would send a few balls through his head, as they had no wish to be commanded by a dog of a Christian! The German, not willing to await the execution of these threats, took advantage of the peace to go to Oran, and present himself to the General. This officer, for the purpose of maintaining the good understanding which, according to all appearances, began to be established between Abd-el-Kader and the French, wrote to the Sultan, informing him of the arrival of the German deserter, and of his desire to enter into

his regiment. He informed him at the same time, that he would never consent to allow the man to enter into the service of France; that he might send for him, and act as he chose with regard to him. Abd-el-Kader ordered his chaous to go to Oran, and reclaim the deserter. He was delivered up without difficulty. The chaous bound him with cords and dragged him off. The poor fellow perceived, on the road, some French soldiers, who were engaged in repairing it.—“Help, my friends! Will you allow one of your countrymen to be carried off by the Arabs—a comrade who has fought these rascals with you? Help!—they are going to cut off my head! Will you allow one of your companions to be strangled, without an effort to assist him?” The soldiers threw down their mattocks, took up their musquets, and were about to run to the assistance of the prisoner; but a gen-d’arme, sent to protect the chaous, and prevent any attempt at rescuing the German, arrived at full gallop, called out to the soldiers, explained to them the prisoner’s position, and commanded them to let him go.

During this parley the chaous hurried their march. The prisoner called to his comrades; his comrades could no longer hear his voice, nor see him. They conducted the deserter to Mascara; he remained a year in prison, in irons. He was so enraged at the conduct of the French towards him, that he abjured Christianity, and turned Mussulman immediately on coming out of prison. He refused

to resume his functions of instructor, and set himself to make gunpowder at Mascara; but having no other resource, and that not being sufficient to maintain him, he set out for Morocco, from whence he hoped to pass into Spain.

The Aga endeavours, since his departure, to instruct the soldiers himself in marching in step; but he succeeds very imperfectly in disciplining these tattered bands—enemies to all restraint and order. They charge well enough; but as for marching and carrying their guns, they know absolutely nothing: the boys who, in France, play at soldiers in the streets, perform the exercise much better than the foot soldiers and horsemen of Abd-el-Kader.

It is only since the month of September, 1836, that the Arab horsemen wear a vest and red breeches, *à la Turque*. They throw over them a haick and a bernou: their feet are protected by Turkish slippers. They have a gun, a sabre, and a cartouch box, which contains a dozen cartridges. They never, on any occasion, part with the latter, which is suspended at their right hip, by means of a belt passed round the neck.

The saddles of their horses are of wood, covered with Turkish leather; they are raised very high both before and behind, and the horseman is, in some measure, fitted in when on horseback. The stirrups are very short and very large; the extremities are mounted, and they use them for striking their horses' sides. They, however, wear spurs,

which are nothing more than iron nails of eight or ten inches in length, with the points of which they wound their horses' flanks. The only horses which are shod are those belonging to the merchants, and which are destined to make long journeys. Those of Abd-el-Kader are not.

The horseman places between the saddle and the horse's back six or eight coverings of inferior cloth, to preserve it from the wounds which the wood of the saddle might inflict. In spite of this precaution, the greater part of the Arabian horses have their backs galled. They never curry-comb them, but are satisfied with throwing some water on their bodies when they take them to drink. They remain, night and day, constantly exposed to the rain, cold, and sun. In consequence, the Arabian horses are very soon worn out; they do not last longer than six years. The foot soldiers wear a woollen waistcoat, Turkish trowsers, a black vest, a hood, and slippers. Like the horsemen, they have a cartouch box and a gun; in addition, a knife hangs at their belt. The richest of them carry a poignard, pistols, and yataghans.

In the camp, as in the towns, and in the desert, the Arabs pray six times a day; at three, six, and eight o'clock in the morning; at mid-day, four, and eight o'clock in the evening.

Maraboots, turning to the four cardinal points, summon the faithful to prayer, exclaiming, in a slow and solemn voice, "*God is God, and Mahomed is his prophet: come and pay your homage.*"

Then a maraboot recites the prayer in each tent. The attendants of Abd-el-Kader arrange themselves in a right line at the entrance of his tent. The faithful commence by rubbing their hands and face with dust. They reply and bow down at all the signs and marks of adoration for the Supreme Being made by the maraboot. God is great—they throw themselves on the earth as a sign of their humiliation before the grandeur of God. The prayer concluded, they wash their hands and face. They have a military band, which plays three times a day, before the tent of Abd-el-Kader—at mid-day, four o'clock, and eight o'clock, after the prayer. Three musicians, standing up, play the hautbois; three others, also standing up, strike the timbrels with sticks, and three others, seated on the ground, beat, with small drum-sticks, upon basons covered with goat-skin.

Their musical collection is little varied; they only know, I think, three airs, of which I have never been able to catch the melody. When the sultan is tired of hearing the music, he makes a sign, and the musicians retire.

Each chief carries with him a servant, whose duty it is to prepare coffee. These pitch a tent, where their masters retire to take their favourite beverage and smoke their pipes. The tobacco is very bad, and green, like chicory. I shall speak afterwards more fully of the cafés.

In the evening, when returned to our tents, I asked Meurice if there were no other Christians in

the camp beside ourselves. He replied that "two French deserters and three Sardinian prisoners shared our sorrowful condition." I expressed a desire to see these companions in misfortune; Meurice rose, and said he would fetch them. In fact, he returned in five minutes with the five Europeans.

CHAPTER VI.

TWO DESERTERS.—CORAL FISHERS.—MASSACRE OF THE CREW OF THE BARQUES "LA CONCEPTION," "LE SAINT JEAN LE BAPTISTE," AND "LE JESUS ET MARIE."—KINDNESS OF THE WOMEN OF TENEZ.—THREE CORAL FISHERS SOLD TO ABD-EL-KADER.—A LITTLE CABIN BOY.—HE IS SENT TO THE WIFE OF ABD-EL-KADER.—RECENT DETAILS RESPECTING THE CORAL FISHERS.

THE two deserters related to me the history of their misfortune in energetic terms, and traced a frightful picture of the deplorable state into which they were plunged. In spite of their willingness to serve the Arabs, and furnish them with useful expedients, they nearly allowed them to die of hunger, and overwhelmed them with the most humiliating marks of contempt. They expressed to me their repentance and regret in having ever abandoned their colours, and the joy they would have in rejoining them, provided a promise was given them, that they should not be shot. Meurice added, that one of the deserters, named Jean Mardulin, had rendered him many services, and that this unfortunate man deserved our being interested in his fate. The cruel treatment of the Arabs was a sufficiently severe punishment for his desertion.

The coral fishers were as sad, and still more unfortunate than the deserters. As we had no

other pastime than conversing together on our misfortunes, we stretched ourselves on the earth in the tent, and I requested one of the fishers to relate how he and his comrades had fallen into the power of the Arabs, which he did in the following terms.

“Between Chercell and Mousthaganem, at some thousand fathoms from the coast, opposite Ténez, is an uninhabited island; it is merely a rock, under which small vessels may shelter themselves.

“In the earlier days of July, 1836, our three Sardinian coral vessels, ‘Le Saint Jean Baptiste, La Conception, Le Jesus et Marie,’ stopped there, at a spot where Angelo Floria, owner of the Saint Jean Baptiste and La Conception, had discovered a coral bank abundantly supplied.

“Arrived at the island, we found two vessels, the one on shore, the other afloat. The latter immediately hastened to throw a rope to the other. Six Moors of Chercell, whom we had known at Algiers, got into them.

“We were delighted to find ourselves among acquaintances, and we asked the Moors if we had nothing to dread from the Arabs who dwell on the coast of Ténez. They replied that the Arabs need cause us no fear, as they had no vessels to enable them to reach the island. ‘They might,’ added they, ‘take advantage of our ships, if they heard of your presence in these parts, or if they should discover from the coast your three vessels. But, in order that they may not ask us what you

are seeking around the island, and to deprive them of all means of arriving here, we engage, during the time of your fishing, not to go to the main land, on the single condition that you will supply us with food.'

"We quickly accepted their proposition; we were entirely without distrust. We had often seen these Moors at Algiers; we had often smoked and taken coffee with them, and were persuaded we had to deal with honest people.

"We then divided our biscuit and *eau de vie* with them, and began our fishery, which was very abundant for five successive days. The coral we collected was worth 1800 francs. We were very well contented, and told the Moors how satisfied we were with the success of our fishery; they appeared uneasy, and we perceived upon their countenances marks of agitation and secret inquietude.

"Angelo Floria, owner of the Saint Jean Baptiste and La Conception, was the first to perceive this change. The prolongation of their stay upon an arid and uninhabited rock caused him, moreover, to suspect the good faith of the Moors. He had visited that neighbourhood for a long time, and he knew, that the first quality of a ship captain in this country is to distrust the Arabs. He communicated to us his suspicions and uneasiness, and requested us to be on our guard against the perfidious manœuvres of our pretended friends, at all times wrapped in mystery and silence.

“The remarks of Floria produced a profound impression upon all on board the three vessels. Every one agreed with him that we ought to quit the island; and on the morning of the sixth day we agreed to leave the anchorage, and to withdraw the same evening to the east of Cape Ténez. We knew we should find at that spot as safe an anchorage as that we then occupied.

“The wind freshened during the day. La Conception and Jesus et Marie were, unfortunately, not able to double the Cape. The owner of the Saint Jean Baptiste had arrived at the anchorage indicated, but not finding the other two vessels, he soon rejoined us under the island from which we had in vain endeavoured to depart.

“During the working of the Saint Jean Baptiste, some of us, after having secured the Jesus et Marie and La Conception, disembarked on the rock. We were immediately assailed by a shower of balls, and a crowd of Arabs from Ténez, conducted by the Moors, pounced upon us, with their yataghans in their hands. I remained, with my two companions and a cabin boy, in the power of the Ténésians. The remainder of the crew threw themselves into the sea, and were exposed to a severe fusilade from the Arabs. I had received eight cuts of the yataghan, in endeavouring to knock down the wretches who had so cowardly betrayed us. I also received abuse and blows both of the stick and musket stocks. We saw our companions killed before our eyes. We were witness to the burning of the

Jesus et Marie and La Conception, and the pillage of every thing on board.

“After the division of the booty, the Arabs set out for Ténez. On the way they made a halt, during which time they canvassed the question of our preservation or death; at length, after a long discussion, they decided on conducting us alive to Abd-el-Kader, in the hope of obtaining more money from him.

“We remained two days at Ténez. The kind reception of the inhabitants repaid us for the sufferings and bad treatment on the journey. The Kait of Ténez seemed to interest himself in our fate. He never quitted us a moment, and enquired of us with lively curiosity the details of the coral fishery. Our explanation of the manner of collecting it seemed to amuse him much. He also prevented the Arabs striking us. The women of the village displayed great kindness and pity towards me. I had eight yataghan wounds on my body. These excellent women never left me a moment; and they passed the whole time I remained at Ténez in rubbing my wounds with honey and butter. They also gave me, as well as my companions, white bread and fruit. They overwhelmed the little cabin boy with caresses. On seeing all the care, all the attentions by which I was surrounded, I fancied myself at Genoa, rather than on the coasts of Barbary. I shall always remember the women of Ténez, and the kindness they showered upon me with so much zeal and disinterestedness.

“We set out from Ténez two days after our misfortune, and we soon arrived at the camp of Abd-el-Kader. We have been prisoners a month, without any intelligence of our comrades. We know not if we shall be ransomed or exchanged. Bad treatment and misery are not wanting. However, I am quite cured of my wounds, and we are all three of us in hopes, with the assistance of the Holy Virgin, and that of the French governor in Africa, it will end by our being restored to liberty, and returning to our homes.

“Abd-el-Kader has sent the cabin boy to his wife. It seems he is very well off with her, and that the women are as kind to children as the Arabs are barbarians to the men. By means of cajoleries, the Bedouins will make the little fellow forget his country, his mother, the Holy Virgin, and will teach him their prayers, and make him a Mahometan. We have not yet seen him since our separation; but I hope that we shall meet him on the day that Abd-el-Kader breaks up his camp.

“Lieutenant, if you write to the Governor, or to the military authorities at Oran and Algiers, I entreat you to say some few words in favour of three poor Christians. You will not forget me, Lieutenant. I have no more to say.”

I gave the three fishermen the assurance that I would interest myself in their fate as soon as I could attend to my own. They then retired to the kitchen tent, where they were lodged.

CHAPTER VII.

LETTERS TO ADMIRAL DUFRESNE AND GENERAL RAPATEL.—THE CAMP IS BROKEN UP.—ORDER OF MARCH.—THE INFANTRY.—THE BAGGAGE.—HONOURS PAID TO ABD-EL-KADER.—CAVALRY.—MARCH.—THE CAMP PITCHED ANEW.—MOUSTHAGANEM.—THE SULTAN'S ENTRY INTO HIS CAMP ON HORSEBACK.—ALERTNESS OF THE ARABS DURING THE NIGHT.—DEPARTURE.—RETURN TO EL-KAALA.

I HAD asked permission of Abd-el-Kader to write to Algiers and Oran. I was desirous of informing the authorities of these two cities of my captivity, and my arrival at the camp of the Sultan. The same evening, about eight o'clock, a maraboot conducted me to the tent of Abd-el-Kader. The latter then gave me a pen, which was nothing more than a piece of reed, a small sheet of common paper, as large as my hand, and his copper inkstand, the form of which is long and square. On one side is the ink, on the other a drawer, contrived in the frame-work of the box, in which the pens are placed. A slave brought a candlestick, of copper and lead, similar to those which decorate the principal altars of the country churches in France. I sat down on the ground, and, at a sign from Abd-el-Kader, a negro brought me a small chest, in which the Sultan keeps his jewels, to serve as a table. I addressed a letter to Admiral Dufresne, and another to General Rapatel.

I informed them of my captivity ; I described to them the misery of the prisoners ; and entreated them to think of our deliverance and hasten our exchange. I gave the two letters to Abd-el-Kader : he assured me they should be sent the next day.*

We were awakened very early the next morning by the chief of our tent.

“ Dogs of Christians ! sons of dogs ! get up ; they are going to take down the tent ; the Sultan has ordered us to break up the camp.”

He had scarcely pronounced these words, when the stakes and canvas of the tent fell upon Meurice and me. It was one of the thousand malicious tricks, and of the thousand agreeable pleasantries, with which the Arabs never ceased treating us. This conduct had a great effect upon Meurice ; as for me, I have always displayed the greatest indifference to it, and I believe it is the only method of checking their maliciousness and brutality. He who despises danger, who opposes *sang froid* and firmness to threats, always ends by obtaining the esteem, almost the respect, of these beings, which is by no means flattering, I admit, but still very useful, when our lives depend on their pleasure. We had the greatest difficulty in freeing ourselves from the covering. We resembled two fish caught in a net.

While we were striving to disengage ourselves the

* I have never received any answer to these letters, and am assured, since my return to Algiers, that they had never been sent to their address.

drum beat. It gave the signal for rising. A few moments afterwards we heard a second roll. It was the signal for the departure of the infantry, which immediately commenced its march. At the same time, the camels, mules, and pack-horses approached the tents. They filled panniers, plaited with the leaves of the palm tree, with the articles they wished to carry away, and placed them on the animals.

A third roll of the drum gave the signal for the muleteers and camel-drivers to set out with the baggage. Meurice and I were placed in the middle of this convoy, the movements of which Ben-Faka had the charge of watching during the journey. By Abd-el-Kader's order, Ben-Faka made us mount each upon one of the two mules which carried the Sultan's coffers. The Italian sailors were not so well treated ; they gave them camels.

I remarked, while they were placing the baggage on the animals, eight boxes, badly closed. They contained cartridges, and formed the reserve ammunition. When they raise the camp, Abd-el-Kader, who was up, like all the Arabs, at three o'clock in the morning, to repeat his prayers, ceases not praying until all the tents are struck, and his only remains for the slaves to fold up. He then goes out of his tent, removes a few paces distant, and seats himself upon a silken cushion ; the marabouts and principal chiefs surround him. During this time, the horsemen assemble and arrange themselves, Mouftar at their head, in a line

on the right of Abd-el-Kader; the thirty negro slaves place themselves on the left, in a single line; and we may judge of the beautiful arrangement, by imagining this line of thirty horsemen facing a line of three hundred. The chiefs and the marabouts then mount on horseback, and, as soon as the baggage has passed the boundaries of the camp, a slave advances, holding by the bridle the horse of Abd-el-Kader, and followed by another slave, carrying the stool of which the Sultan makes use, as a step, to place himself in the saddle.

Abd-el-Kader has several horses, but gives the preference to a magnificent black one. The Sultan's legs are short, and his body long. The custom of the Arabs having the stirrups very short is therefore advantageous; it prevents the disproportion between his legs and the rest of his body being seen. His bearing on horseback is gracious, and, at the same time, imposing. He is the best horseman I have met with among the Arabs.

As soon as the Sultan is mounted, the chiefs give the signal of departure. The nine musicians, on horseback, open the march; after them come eight Arabs, carrying long guns, in wrappers of red cloth. I have often asked to examine them, but they have always replied, "They are the Sultan's arms; a dog of a Christian like thee is not worthy to look at them."

These eight Arabs are followed by the four horsemen, carrying the four flags I have already mentioned.

After them Abd-el-Kader advances, in the centre of a body of cavalry. The thirty negroes come after him, and the march is closed by the remainder of the horsemen, who follow pell-mell. The Arabs never set out until the moment the sun begins to shine.

They observe no order or discipline on the march. Thus, when a foot soldier or a horseman perceives a fruit tree, or an isolated tent, he separates himself from the corps to which he belongs, and hastens to strip the branches of the tree, or pillage the tent. Two mules, thinner and leaner than the most miserable car horses, harnessed in the most singular manner, draw the cannon of which I have already spoken. Not a day passes, when the army is on the march, in which it is not overthrown three or four times, or sunk in the mud. I hope some fine morning they will be obliged to leave it buried in the sand. It will be a happy circumstance for the unfortunate gunners. There will be so much the less useless labour, and they will no longer burn their hands in firing it off.

On the 17th August, then, we left the neighbourhood of El-Kaala, and arrived the same day, one hour after noon, in the plain of Mousthaganem, at four leagues from that city.*

* Mousthaganem, a town situated six leagues from the left bank of the river Cheliff, and a quarter of a league from the sea, is built on a hill of considerable height, and is divided by a ravine. It is surrounded by a circle of fortifications, in very bad state. Several exterior forts assist in its defence. They formerly counted in Mousthaganem 12,000 inhabitants, the

Ben-Faka marked out the spot where the camp was to be pitched, which is his especial duty. The infantry arrived there first, and as soon as the baggage had reached the spot, the muleteers and camel-drivers unloaded the burthens, and the soldiers began to erect the tents.

The Arabs always turn the doors of their tents to the east, and they find out the position so correctly, even in the worst weather, that the first sun which shows itself always casts its earliest rays through the door. Habit supplies the place of science, and leads them to results which civilized man does not attain without long study. I have made a similar remark every time I have been in the country in France, and watched the peasants at their labours. The shepherds and labourers, from the observations of their fathers, and those they are in the habit of making daily themselves, foresee, with a great deal of certainty, the changes of wind, the arrival of rain, and the weather of the following day. Ben-Faka himself overlooks the slaves, who have to prepare the Sultan's tent before all others. They take care to water the approach to it. While they were just completing it, the harsh and shrill sound of the music announced the arrival of Abd-el-Kader.

When the cavalry was a short distance from the camp, the horsemen detached themselves in troops, set off at full speed, and when they had passed to greater part of whom occupied themselves in making gold embroidery. The population is much less at present.

a distance of three hundred paces, quickly turned their horses, returned at a furious gallop, aiming at Abd-el-Kader with their guns. The moment they reached the Sultan, they turned on one side the muzzle of their pieces, and discharged them between the horses' legs, This game, the object of which is to pay Abd-el-Kader the military honours due to his rank, lasts until his arrival at the camp. Then the remainder of the horsemen hastened to form themselves in line of battle to the right of the tent, while the thirty negroes filed one by one on the left. The band of musicians filled the air with their discordant symphonies, and the report of the cannon, sent from hill to hill by the wind, announced to the neighbouring tribes the arrival of the Sultan in his camp. Abd-el-Kader passed through the middle of the space formed by his cavalry, casting upon his Arabs a look in which was painted the pride and despotism of a chief, and at the same time making his horse caracol. Two slaves, armed with long poles, raised the corner of the tent, the horse reared up, filled the air with fierce neighs, fell back upon his hind legs, and advanced thus into the interior of the tent, trampling under his feet the carpets which covered the ground. Abd-el-Kader, however, with a proud and easy air, contemplated his Arabs, who, with mouth open, admired his address and graceful action.

As soon as the charger stopped, the zealous Ben-Faka prostrated himself, and offered his back in form of a footstool. A slave led the horse away,

and walked it for ten minutes before the tent; the maraboots and principal chiefs surrounded Abd-el-Kader; Mouftar ordered the drums to beat. They broke their ranks, and each horseman proceeded to fasten his horse before the tent the baggagemen had prepared for him.

The chiefs of the neighbouring tribes, informed by the noise of the cannon, hastened to pay their homage to the Sultan. They entered pell-mell into the tent, hurried towards Abd-el-Kader, who was seated upon his sofa, and kissed his hand, in sign of respect and obedience, the turban formed by the folds of his haick, and one of the corners of his bernou. Abd-el-Kader pretended to kiss their hands in return. On this day he received the visits of very few Arabs; the greater number had joined the French. They brought that evening only a little couscoussou for the soldiers' food.

In the night, the drummers gave the signal of alarm. Every one rose, and the report spread, that Ibrahim, Bey of Mousthaganem, had made a sortie with his troops, and was marching to meet the Sultan. At midnight, Abd-el-Kader left the camp, with his cavalry, and proceeded in the direction where Ibrahim was supposed to be, with the intention of watching his movements.

From Abd-el-Kader's departure until his return, great disorder and agitation reigned in the camp. Being perfectly indifferent to all this, I had tranquilly laid myself down behind a bale of goods. Meurice, not finding me in the tent, sought me the

whole of the night in all the corners of the camp, enquiring of the French deserters and the coral-fishers, where I could be. All their search was useless, and Meurice was convinced I had taken advantage of the general confusion to escape. A violent despair then seized him, and he sat down to weep over his fate. He accused me of indifference and cruelty.—“How could I have fled without letting him know, and inviting him to follow me ! He was alone among the Arabs. His captivity had lasted five months, and I had only passed a few days with our enemies.” He allowed his thoughts to sink into despondency. He had forgotten I could scarcely walk : my feet were covered with wounds. The bad treatment, moreover, must have made him very distrustful, to suppose for a moment I could have abandoned him. He was, moreover, constantly on the look-out for news of every description ; and, in his ardour to recover his liberty, he collected the most extravagant and contradictory reports : his credulity was that of a child. It is true, the alarm which reigned in the camp had caused the attention to the prisoners to be neglected, and the general tumult singularly favoured an attempt at escape. It was the only opportunity which presented itself during my captivity (we were only four leagues from Mousthaganem), but the state in which my feet were absolutely prevented my profiting by it.

Meurice found me at sunrise ; I was sleeping profoundly. His joy was extreme, as he squeezed

my hand, but not so great as his astonishment at seeing me sleeping peacefully, in the midst of the commotion and agitation in the camp. How delighted I should have been, to have made him share my tranquillity ! But a continual disquietude ruled all his faculties, and I have never been able to withdraw him from its influence, even for a moment.

Abd-el-Kader returned to the camp at daybreak. He had not met Ibrahim, and brought the news the French army had left Oran four days previously. He was not entirely reassured, with regard to Ibrahim ; and in the ignorance as to the direction he had taken, he ordered the camp to be raised. We retraced our steps, and halted at five minutes' distance from El-Kaala, about eleven o'clock in the morning.

The inhabitants of Kaala showed themselves much annoyed and discontented at this fresh visit of Abd-el-Kader. They had to feed his troops and support his camp, all of which dried up their resources. In consequence, they did not come to pay their homage, when the report of the cannon informed them of his arrival. The Turks, who inhabit the town, fled to the mountains, to save their money. Abd-el-Kader, perceiving the bad disposition of the inhabitants of Kaala, immediately set out for that town with fifty horsemen. He soon returned. His horsemen were loaded with carpets and different articles, carried off from the most refractory ; and while the horsemen spread out their booty before the tent of the Sultan, and the

chiefs distributed it to the different individuals, according to their rank, the inhabitants of Kaala mourned for their lost riches, and, with hearts full of resentment, fired six cannon to salute the Sultan, and express the joy his presence afforded them.

CHAPTER VIII.

DELIGHTFUL ENCAMPMENT.—FAVOURABLE POSITION FOR AN AGRICULTURAL ESTABLISHMENT AND WATER-MILLS.—ABD-EL-KADER GAVE ME A FEW SOUS TO DIVIDE BETWEEN MEURICE AND MYSELF.—THE TRIBES COME TO PAY THEIR IMPOSTS.—DESCRIPTION OF THE TRAIN.—EXCELLENT REPAST.—WE HAVE COFFEE.—ABD-EL-KADER RECEIVES THE THREE CONVOYS FROM MOROCCO.—TWO SPIES.—THE SULTAN OPENS THE LETTERS OF GENERAL LETANG.

WE set out the next day, the 23d August, at five o'clock in the morning, from Kaala, and directed our route towards the north. After seven hours' march we stopped at the extremity of the plain of Mousthaganem, on the side of the river Cheliff. The camp was pitched upon a mountain, in the midst of a wood of oaks and mastic trees. This mountain borders the whole length of the plain of Mousthaganem, the full extent of which the eye embraced. I cannot better compare the position of our camp than to that which the ruins of old feudal manor-houses occupy, in the provinces where they have not yet been swept away to make room for more modern edifices. It was upon a steep rock, on the declivity of a mountain, that the seigneurs always placed their castles; not only to be protected from a sudden attack, and be in an impregnable position, but also to watch over the serfs on the plain, and defend them against the inroads

of the neighbouring lords. Such was the spot that Ben-Faka had chosen, on which to establish the camp. The tent of Abd-el-Kader was situated about a hundred fathoms from a very abundant spring, which spouts from the earth, and forms a basin of limpid and clear water, of a surface of about twenty square feet, supplying several brooks which water the plain.

As it was very warm, Zaka, Abd-el-Kader's cup-bearer, made the slaves dig two small drains, which led the water from the basin to the tent of the Sultan; there it was received into two trenches. The curtains, which occupy the space between the cords which fasten the ends of the tent to the earth, were raised, which thus presented the appearance of a small island. I thought Faka's contrivance very ingenious and refined. The water preserved a delightful freshness in the tent, and offered a pleasing sight.

We occupied, moreover, a most picturesque and cheerful position. The plain of Mousthagane, the natural riches of which could easily be made productive, if pains were only taken to make use of the water which the neighbouring mountains supply, spread itself at our feet, covered with herds, tents, and numerous crops. A ravine, crowned with fig, olive, almond, peach, apricot trees, and vines, connects the plain with the mountain. Small gardens, abundantly supplied with fruit trees and flowers, marked out on the two declivities of the ravine, in the middle of which the rivulets, which

flow to fertilize the plain, have worn their bed, offer a varied and delightful prospect. The situation is delightful. I might be tempted to write an idyle, to speak of the murmuring of the waters, rolling over the golden sands, their crystal clearness, the perfume of the flowers and the plants, listening, in the midst of this solitude, like dreamy and careless seraglio females, to the song of the birds. But I leave these descriptions to others, and prefer being prosaic and matter-of-fact.

They might derive great advantage from this site, if they were to form agricultural establishments in the plain, or if they were to build mills in this mountain gorge. The waterfalls are sufficient to move the wheels, and communicate life and motion to manufactories of every description. Besides, the barley and wheat they might reap on the plain with facility and in abundance, by collecting the waters at the foot of the mountain in large tanks, and by means of irrigating canals, they might constantly preserve fertile meadows, from which a great quantity of hay might be obtained; without taking into consideration the after-grass, which would often be equal to the first crop.

We discovered, near the camp, the ruins of a water-mill. - The Spaniards, doubtless, were the erectors of it.

The sight of this landscape, and the resources it assured the camp, excited the joy of the troops. I shared the general satisfaction. Abd-el-Kader was in good humour; and in a generous vein.

He ordered twelve small pieces, of eight mousouné* each, to be given to me to share with Meurice. This proof of the Sultan's munificence was effectual in driving from my mind unpleasant presentiments. I forgot the misery of the present to think of the future. This liberality,—which I was far from expecting,—this public manifestation of good-will, made me hope a speedy exchange, more particularly as the Arabs whom General Bugeaud had taken to Marseilles were as impatient as I was to be restored to liberty and their country.

In the morning they brought some melons, water melons, peaches, figs, and grapes, of which we received a share. We regaled ourselves; the grapes in particular were excellent, and far superior to the most famous French grapes.

I spent a part of the day in admiring the landscape which unrolled itself at our feet, and in wandering along the course of the little rivulets which flowed round Abd-el-Kader's tent. I had stretched myself in the shade, and given way to pleasant reveries, when I was aroused by a lively and cheerful scene.

Towards four o'clock, all the neighbouring tribes,† headed by their Kaits, came to the camp to pay their imposts. The Kaits, on horseback, armed with a baton, preceded each tribe. The Arabs,

* The mousouné is worth one sou. Twelve small pieces, of eight mousouné each, are worth four francs eighty cents of French money.

† A tribe is composed of several families, who live in tents. They are each governed by a chief, whom they call Kait, and who is appointed by Abd-el-Kader.

men, women, and children, followed them, two and two, carrying on their heads dishes of couscoussou. The richest walked out of the ranks, bearing entire sheep, roasted and spitted, on wooden poles. Arrived before the tent of Abd-el-Kader, the chief advanced, and announced to the Sultan that he had brought the tribute. The one party then placed their dishes at the entrance of the tent, the other party rested their spits upon the earth, and held them in a vertical position. The dishes of couscoussou, composed of honey, hard eggs, dried grapes, boiled poultry, quarters of mutton, presented to the eye a very varied and appetizing sight. The Arabs immediately hastened into the tent to salute the Sultan; many, favoured by the tumult, attempted to pilfer the dishes placed on the earth, but the Kaits dispersed the multitude with their sticks, and succeeded, not without difficulty, in re-establishing order. Abd-el-Kader cast a glance at the dishes placed in symmetrical order before his tent, and Ben-Faka then distributed the provisions in the camp.

As soon as Abd-el-Kader had finished his repast, Ben-Faká, who always waits upon him, brought the remains of the feast to our tent. They spread a skin on the carpet which covered the centre of the ground, upon which they placed the dish of couscoussou touched by the Sultan. That same evening we had a roasted sheep for our tent. Ben-Faka and other marabouts seated themselves in a circle around the leathern table cover, and devoured the sheep and the couscoussou without bread, and

by tearing it with their fingers. The Sultan had put back on the dish the bones and pieces of meat which he had touched. The maraboots and Ben-Faka, after having cut up the sheep, and the couscoussou also, left on the dish the bones and meat they did not wish to eat; and when these great personages had satisfied their hunger, the remains passed into third hands, and formed the supper of Abd-el-Kader's slaves, who knawed the bones and fragments of meat like dogs.

Ben-Faka summoned Meurice and me to partake of the feast. He threw beyond the circle a piece of the mutton, which we eat, like the Arabs, without bread, and tearing it with the fingers. We had also a few scraps from the dish of couscoussou. The water was contained in leathern bottles. Each of the guests used the same cup for drinking; they never washed it, and, of course, the prisoners were always the last to drink. No matter; after the privations of every description to which we had been subjected, we found the repast excellent. To conclude a day thus happily commenced, and to close a dinner in which we had eaten meat, I asked the permission of Ben-Faka to have some coffee brought.

“ Coffee for a dog of a Christian !”

“ And why not ?

“ But who will pay for it ?”

“ Has not the Sultan given us some money this morning ?”

“ The Sultan is great and generous ; is he not ?”

“ Your Sultan is great, generous, magnificent ;

he has given six pieces, (forty-eight sous;) certainly if ever I am exchanged, I will proclaim his liberality among the Christians."

The words softened Ben-Faka's obstinacy. His coffee maker entered at this moment; he ordered him to bring us some coffee.

Ben-Faka shared the general joy; he began to converse with us, and to tell us the power and the riches of his master. I remarked that he conversed so long, and with such apparent cordiality, in order to induce us to request his protection, and to promise him presents when we should have returned to Algiers. He showed us a snuff box, on the top of which was a small mirror.* It would be impossible to paint the admiration of the maraboots and Arabs who were in the tent, at the sight of this treasure. Ben-Faka was as proud and as happy in the possession of this box, as a Jew would be in possession of the most valuable jewel in the crown of the King of Spain.

Meurice, who never lost an opportunity of maintaining the good disposition of the Arabs, and who was always seeking to render them favourable to him, promised Ben-Faka to send him a gold

* The Arabs are quite as unacquainted with the productions of civilized life as the inhabitants of the most distant islands. When some, who were our allies, came on board the *Aleyone*, they did not cease admiring the copper covering over the compass. This covering is polished, and kept well bright; the Arabs saw themselves in it, and I have seen several, like apes, when a mirror is presented to them, pass and repass, attempt to catch their image, place their hands upon it, and even raise it, to satisfy themselves there was no one concealed beneath it.

snuff box from Algiers when he had recovered his liberty. I allow you to guess the joy of the minister of finance of the great Sultan, and the promises of regard for the dog of a Christian !

The slave of Ben-Faka's coffee maker interrupted our conversation. He carried upon a tin tray two small earthenware cups, which he placed before us. These cups have no handles; in order that one may be able to take hold of them without burning the fingers, they are placed in small copper saucers. I found the coffee excellent; it was served in the Turkish style, with the grounds. Each cup, with the moist sugar, cost a sou; and they gave us, in addition, a pipe to smoke.

I still recal to mind this day with pleasure; it so little resembled the other days of my captivity. We had no bad treatment to endure; Abd-el-Kader and Ben-Faka showed us every kindness. Moreover, during the whole of this encampment, we suffered neither hunger nor cold. The weather was beautiful; we had fruit in abundance. During the night I stole some white bread from the sacks; the tranquillity in which they left us, the food, the beautiful sun which warmed us, afforded some hours of, I may almost say, happiness.

It has been said that Abd-el-Kader obtained from the empire of Morocco neither money, powder, clothing, biscuit, nor arms. The information collected in Morocco is contradicted by the facts which Meurice and I were eye-witnesses of.

The 7th August, 1836, a convoy arrived at the camp of Abd-el-Kader from Morocco, bringing

shirts, caps, slippers, breeches, and cloaks, for six hundred men.

Meurice saw this convoy, and has entered the date of its arrival at the camp in his note book.

On the 15th August, a convoy of fifteen camels, loaded with gunpowder and balls, arrived from Morocco.

Meurice has also marked the following date in his book.

25th August. Abd-el-Kader has received from the empire of Morocco a supply of biscuits and saltpetre.

When this last convoy was unloaded before Abd-el-Kader's tent, Ben-Faka called, and said, while counting the bales which the slaves were carrying to the magazines,

"See if the Sultan is not great! His power extends to the distance; his allies have not deserted him."

"You think, then, your master more powerful than the King of France? You think the resources he with difficulty obtains from his ally can be compared with those our fine country supply. Go, a night of bad weather, one battle, will exhaust all these supplies."

"Son of a dog! guard thy tongue better next time, and Ben-Faka accompanied this address by a blow of a stick which fell on my legs, and an ejection of spittle which my face received.

I withdrew, without saying a word, promising to myself to put in practice the secret he had just taught me.

Every time the Arabs saw a convoy arrive from Morocco, joy spread through the camp, and the horsemen paid the same honours to the chief of the convoy as to Abd-el-Kader, and which I have already described.

On the 28th August, two Arab spies arrived in the camp. The one brought a great number of gun flints, which he had purchased at Oran; the other, charged by the French government to carry the correspondence of the Governor of Tlemcen to the General in command at Oran, delivered a packet of letters to Abd-el-Kader.

Abd-el-Kader broke the seals, summoned Meurice, and ordered him to read them. Meurice obeyed. Abd-el-Kader then re-sealed them, and forwarded them to Oran, where they were addressed.

A few days afterwards the same Arab, who still filled the employ of French courier, returned to the camp, bringing Abd-el-Kader the reply of General Létang, Commandant at Oran, to the letters of the Commandant at Tlemcen. Abd-el-Kader summoned me, he unsealed the letters before me with great precaution, and ordered me to read them aloud.

The General informed the Commandant of Tlemcen that he had returned from his expedition against the Beni-Amers. He had accomplished it without striking a blow. He had emptied the Silos*

* Silos. They are large holes, formed with great care in the earth, the top of which is rough-cast. These caves are the granaries of the Arabs, and contain their wheat, barley, and

of the Arabs, against whom he had directed his sortie.

"The officers of the brig 'Loiret,' added General Létang in his letter, stationed at Arzew, have been foolish enough to go hunting. Lieutenant de France has fallen into the hands of the Arabs."

I took care not to read the first part of the letter; I only read the article which concerned me.

"Is that all there is?" said Abd-el-Kader to me.

"Yes."

"You are deceiving me."

"Read, then, yourself;" (I was certain he could not read French.)

"But there is no mention of the movements of the Christian forces; he ought to have informed the chief at Tlemcen of them."

"It seems he ought not; since he has not written them."

"Go."

I returned to our tent, where I hastened to forewarn Meurice of what had occurred. At the same moment a marabout entered, and ordered Murice to appear before the Sultan.

It was well I had informed him of the deception I had practised on Abd-el-Kader. The Sultan

straw. They can only enter them by means of a hole contrived in the upper part, the form of which resembles that of a reversed funnel, through which a man can scarcely descend. These magazines are constructed with so much care, that neither water or damp ever penetrate, and the provisions are perfectly preserved.

sent him back satisfied, and having quite abandoned any suspicion on my account; for he had suspected deceit, and if Meurice had read what I had omitted, his chaos would soon have put me out of condition ever to relate that the Sultan unseals the letters of our Generals, and say that he would not be able to keep the field long without the assistance of Morocco.

Meurice's health began to be restored; I myself supported my captivity with more patience and courage. But good days, in adversity, are rare, and pass quickly; whilst bad ones are numerous, and roll slowly over. The tranquillity which the Arabs allowed us to enjoy did not last long, and bad treatment soon banished our joy, and the hopes we had so easily conceived.

CHAPTER IX.

THE OUET-MINA.—ABD-EL-KADER IMPOSES A DOUBLE IMPOST.—GREEDINESS OF THE ARABS.—BOOTY.—PRISONERS.—A YOUNG NEGRO FEMALE.—SALE OF SLAVES.—DEFECTIONS.—THE UNCLE OF ABD-EL-KADER.—HE REFUSES TO SUBMIT TO THE SULTAN'S AUTHORITY.—DISCOURAGEMENT OF THE TROOPS.—PUNISHMENT OF THE REBELS.—JEWS SENT TO MASCARA—INSURRECTION OF THE BENI-FLITAS AND KOULEDS.—CHELIFS.—EXPEDITION.—BATTLE.—HORRIBLE PUNISHMENT OF A PRISONER.

THE Arabs broke up the camp (29th August), and, after six hours' march, stopped on the borders of the Ouet-Mina.* The Mina, a river very much banked up, and with a rapid current, takes its rise to the east of 'Tekedemta, and empties itself, at six leagues from the coast, into the Chélif, the most considerable river in the country. The Chélif, which rises in the mountains, to the south of Miliana, runs from east to west, and flows into the sea, near Cape Ivi, between Cape Tenez and the Gulf of Arzew.

Ben-Faka chose an eminence for the position of the camp, connected with the mountain, at the foot of which spreads the western side of the plain of Miliana. This site was as beautiful and as picturesque as the one we had just quitted. At a short distance from our tent, a fall of a considerable body of water formed a cascade, with delightful

* Ouet, an Arab word, which signifies rivulet.

effect.* The waters hurried to the plain, where they were soon lost. If a provident and competent hand had collected them at the foot of the hill, in a large basin, and had led them from this reservoir through the plain, by trenches, traversing in all directions the uncultivated lands, green meadows would quickly have replaced these arid fields, now covered with parasitical plants ; and the oxen, cows, and horses of the Arabs would soon have found other nourishment than brambles and grass, parched by the sun. Besides the hay they might collect in the plain of Ouet-Mina, a large quantity of wheat and barley might also be obtained. The Arabs do not till their lands, and their ploughs do not turn up the ground like ours ; they never disturb more than one or two inches from the surface, and, nevertheless, I have seen a root of wheat which had seven or eight stems.

This province is but little wooded ; but the mountains, which form as it were the boundaries of it, are covered with holm-oaks, and mastic† trees.

Abd-el-Kader laid a double impost upon the tribes around. This severity on the part of the Sultan arose from the Arabs of the district having well received Ibrahim, Bey of Mousthaganem.

* We still see the ruins of a wall, which served to retain the waters and form a fall. A few irrigating canals, dug by the hand of man, lead the waters from this basin. Are we to attribute this construction to the Romans, Moors, or Spaniards?

† The mastic tree does not often exceed the size and form of a shrub. But in the mountains of Tékédemta I have seen them the size of trees. It is excellent firewood, and the seed produces a good deal of oil.

Every day horses, sheep, oxen, which the horse-men had carried off, were brought into the camp. They passed whole days in Abd-el-Kader's tent, counting the money they had pillaged; which, however, does not mean that immense treasures had arrived, to supply the coffers of the Sultan, but that the Arabs, very mistrustful and avaricious, count a sum of money ten or fifteen times in succession. The first secretary, whom, from his office, I suppose to be more enlightened than the other Arabs, often came to our tent, where, squatted behind some bales, often entirely concealed by his haick, he passed whole hours in counting and recounting his money. However, in spite of these severe measures—in spite of the zeal and ardour which the Kaits employed in levying the impost, the tribes paid with great difficulty. Abd-el-Kader then sent his cavalry to their tents, who returned to the camp the same evening, loaded with booty of every description, dragging with them, in their train, horses, oxen, sheep, children, and women.

On the news of the arrival of the prisoners, a great number of Arabs hastened to the camp. They came to see if, among this human cattle, exposed for auction, they might not find some fit for their service. After having cast a rapid glance over the slaves crouched upon the earth, if the purchaser perceived amongst them one whose appearance drew his attention; at the time, he made him rise, and examined him, as they examine an ox in our fairs. He passed in review his eyes, hands, legs, feet; he made him open his mouth, and examined

all his teeth with the greatest attention. If it was a woman, he pressed her bosom, to ascertain if she had suckled. These unfortunate beings allowed themselves to be handled with perfect indifference, and, when the bargain was concluded, rose, and quietly followed their new master.

Among the prisoners destined for sale, and whom they had placed in our tent, was a young female, of about fourteen years of age. She was beautiful; her large black eyes were mild and caressing, her lips as red as coral; and, although the comparison is somewhat used, I make use of it because I know none other more appropriate, her teeth resembled the pearls inlaid with skill in the handle of a yataghan; her legs as slim as those of a race-horse; her feet less than those of a Spanish lady; all the lines of her form perfectly symmetrical. The figure displayed the ampleness round the hip; for the unfortunate girl, contrary to the custom of the women of her country, had fastened her white haick round her loins, by means of a girdle of red wool. She was sure to belong to some opulent master, for every thing about her proved her health, cleanliness, and regularity. Doubtless, and her beauty made it more probable, her first masters intended her to be the slave of some Bey or Emir; and her life, which was thus miserable at present, might at a future period become brilliant and fortunate. The poor girl was seated near me. She wept, lamented, and refused every description of nourishment. On seeing her so disconsolate, I could not restrain a feeling of pity. I bent towards

her, and, in a tone I sought to make as soft as possible, said, "Do not give thus way to your affliction; we cannot alter our fate."

"No, we cannot alter our fate, but we may weep for the happiness we have lost."

"You are so young! Have you lost all hope of happiness?"

"Yes; but how does a Christian speak to a slave?"

"The Christian speaks to a slave as to the Sultan, because he is good and courageous. I dread not Abd-el-Kader; and I seek to comfort the poor girl torn from her tribe, who weeps and laments. The Christian is as unfortunate as yourself—is he not a prisoner?"

"But the Christian will see his country again."

"Who knows?"

"Has not the Sultan said it?—whilst the slave will go to her new masters. I was so happy in the tent whence the horsemen snatched me, during the time the men were guarding our herds on the mountain. I shall be beaten—forced to sleep with the horses; I shall eat no more couscoussou; I shall wear a torn and dirty haick. Is not the fate of the Christian better than mine?" And she wept bitterly.

"The Christian has left in his country a father, who is old, and a dear sister. Do you think he is not afflicted at being far from those he loves? Do you think the Christian sheds no tears in the night, when the Arab sleeps? But why show our grief to our enemies? Hope, poor child; you are so

young, they will have pity on you. Will you eat, if the Christian will share with you what he can procure ?”

“ Yes.”

I immediately proceeded to ransack Ben-Faka's sacks, and I obtained from them some bunches of grapes, which I carried to the sorrowful captive. She looked at me with kindness, thanked me with a sign, and covering her head with the corners of her haick, eat the fruit in concealment.

Soon after, a chief of the Garabas* entered the tent. The Garabas had been welcome to the camp of the Sultan, for he had that morning presented to Abd-el-Kader the head of a French soldier whom he had surprised and slain in the fields, in the neighbourhood of Mousthaganem. He was rich ; he wished to buy some slaves. As soon as he perceived the young girl, a smile of satisfaction lighted up his features, and he ordered the slave to rise.

She obeyed ; and was then subjected to the most minute examination. No fault, no defect of formation was discovered. The Garabas turned to Ben-Faka,

“ Fifty boutjeous.”

“ I must have eighty boutjeous” (about 1,400 francs).

“ She is not worth them.”

“ Have you ever seen as handsome a slave ? Open your mouth.”

* The tribe of the Garabas is between Oran and Arzew.

She obeyed.

“ See what beautiful teeth ! She has not lost one ! Walk.”

The slave began to walk.

“ What hips ! Her step is firm and decided. Open your haick.”

The slave obeyed again.

“ Weep not ; or the chaou will silence you with his stick.”

The slave dried her tears.

“ Eighty boutjeous.”

“ Sixty. She is not strong ; she will not be able to carry the manure from the stable.”

“ In two years she will carry all the dung of the horses of the tent. Eighty boutjeous !”

“ Seventy.”

“ Her hands are beautiful ! she has never worked. Eighty boutjeous. Decide quickly ; for the Sultan expects me.”

“ Here they are.”

The Garabas ordered the slave to follow him. The poor girl went out, fixing upon me her eyes, bathed in tears. I saw them stop before the tent of the Sultan ; the Garabas entered to demand the price of the head he had brought. A few moments after they left the camp. I followed them with my eyes as far as possible, until the trees and inequalities of the road concealed the poor girl from my sight, when I returned sorrowful and pensive to my tent. On the 2d September the courier from Tlemcen to Oran brought several letters. Abd-el-

Kader opened them, had them read to him, resealed them, and sent them to their destination.

The severe measures employed against the neighbouring tribes had not entirely subjected them; they only awaited an opportunity to throw off his yoke.

A maraboot, an uncle of Abd-el-Kader, having declared himself independent, and having refused to pay the tax, the Béni-Flitas and the Houled Chérifs, powerful, rich, and numerous tribes, who occupy a part of the fertile lands near the Ouet-Mina and the surrounding mountains, placed themselves under his authority, declared they would no longer recognise Abd-el-Kader as Sultan, and refused positively to obey him.

The Sultan again sent some horsemen to his uncle to demand the tribute. The maraboot refused, and wrote to Abd-el-Kader,

“ You were nothing before the arrival of the French; you were nothing before the conclusion of the peace with the Christians. I was greater, more powerful, holier than you, Abd-el-Kader. Since the time you concluded a treaty of peace with the French, excited by ambition and the desire of rule, you have sought to usurp an authority which does not belong to you. It is to the Christians you owe your elevation and your power. When you found yourself sufficiently powerful you broke the peace with the French, and to-day you require us to recognise you as sultan.

“ I have always been greater, more powerful, holier than you.

“ I will never recognise you as sultan.

“ I will not pay the imposts the horsemen have come to demand in your name.”

This letter,* of which I only recollect the most striking passages, produced a mournful impression upon Abd-el-Kader. He knew a civil war would be the prelude to his ruin. He remained several days meditative and in deep dejection. The consternation was general throughout the camp. Every Arab looked forward with dread to the day on which he would be compelled to turn his hand against his brethren. A civil war would have the effect of exhausting their supplies to advantage of the enemy, and would assure the approaching rule of the French.

Thus Abd-el-Kader sent courier upon courier to his uncle to induce him to submit, but the marabout was deaf to all his propositions of accommodation, and replied,

“ Abd-el-Kader, I have always been greater, more powerful, and holier than you.

“ I will never recognise you as sultan.

“ Send not your horsemen ; I will pay no impost.”

During this negotiation, Abd-el-Kader convoked all the tribes along the borders of the Ouet-Mina and the Chélif. The Arabs would not take up arms against their neighbours. Scarcely a hundred horsemen answered the call, and when they had passed a day in the camp, they almost all took to

* A coffee maker of the camp, who spoke French, told me the contents of the letter.

flight; those that remained were placed in the centre of the camp and carefully watched.

The defection began already to gain ground among the regular troops of the Sultan. A deep discouragement, a sorrowful disquietude, reigned in every tent. Several tribes, when threatened by the horsemen of Abd-el-Kader, replied, that they knew the road to Mousthaganem, and if they attempted to disturb them, would implore the assistance of the French.

Abd-el-Kader, enraged, wished to stifle without delay this germ of revolt. He caused the principal chiefs to be seized. Four of them remained in the camp in irons, four others, with chains round their necks, bound two and two, were conducted to Mascara, and thrown into the prisons of that city.

The Sultan was still undecided. On the 8th September, the horsemen brought nine Jews to the camp, whom they had carried off from the neighbourhood of Mousthaganem. They also brought the heads of three Turks they had slain.

These Jews had been cruelly ill-treated by the Arabs. They were chained to each other by the neck; their feet were bloody, and torn by the stones and briars along the way; their bodies were covered with wounds. Being conducted before Abd-el-Kader, in order to escape death, they had recourse to a falsehood (if to deceive an enemy to save one's life can be called a falsehood); they replied to the Sultan, that when the French had made themselves masters of Mousthaganem they had fled

from the city, carrying with them their families and property to Mascara.

“ But the French,” continued they, “ compelled us to return to Mousthaganem ; and we were endeavouring to regain Mascara when the horsemen seized us.”

“ Send for your wives, children, and property,” replied the Sultan, “ and return to Mascara. If you obey, no evil shall befall you ; if you do not obey, the chaos will add your heads to those of the Turks.”

“ Abd-el-Kader is a great, holy, and powerful Sultan ; we will go to Mascara with our wives, our children, and our property.”

For two days (8th and 9th September,) the heads of the three Turks, and that of the French soldier which Garabas had brought, remained exposed before the tent of the Sultan. The third day the children picked them up, and amused themselves in rolling them round the camp. At last the Arabs threw them out of the enclosure, and the birds of prey pounced upon the bloody and infected remains.

On the morning of the 10th, Abd-el-Kader began his march, with all his troops and his piece of artillery, and proceeded to attack the Béné-Flitas and the Houled Chérifs. He only left one man for each tent to guard the camp.

The insurgent tribes had been expecting an attack for some time. They had sent off their wives, children, and herds to the mountains.

The Sultan found them united, and ready for

battle, upon an elevated mountain which borders the plain of Miliana, at the marabout nearest to the Ouet-Mina and Ouet-Chélif.

The battle lasted all day. We heard seven or eight cannon shots. They loaded the piece with stones for want of balls.

On the evening Abd-el-Kader returned to his camp, he had lost twelve men, and brought back eight wounded. I have never been able to obtain positive information respecting the issue of the battle, but the consternation of the troops, and the sadness of the Sultan, sufficiently instructed me that he had not gained a victory.

The horsemen brought with them five heads. They drove before them the women and children who had not had time to take refuge in the mountains. These unfortunate beings were conducted to Mascara, and thrown into the prisons of that city.

Only one of the enemy had fallen alive into their hands. Scarcely had Abd-el-Kader dismounted, when they led the prisoner into his tent.

“ You have been taken among the rebels ? ”

“ Yes.”

“ What have you to say to justify yourself.

“ They have compelled me to fight against you ? ”

“ You should have escaped, and then joined our camp.”

“ But ”—

“ Enough.”

Abd-el-Kader raised his hand ; the unhappy man was condemned to death. The chaous dragged him from the tent.

One of the chaous had lost his son in the contest; he had seen his head fixed to the saddlebow of one of the Beni-Flitas. With loud shouts, and tears in his eyes, he entreated the favour from the other chaous of being allowed to execute the prisoner alone.

The chaous, at last, yielded to his wishes. He then threw himself upon the Beni-Flitas and cut off his hands and feet. The children, at this horrible sight, filled the air with their shouts of joy. The unfortunate man rolled in the dust, calling upon his executioners, with heart-rending cries, to end his life. But the father continued his vengeance for the death of his son; he listened neither to the prayers nor groans of the dying man: the sight of the blood which reddened the earth, the hideous contortions of the tortured man, the shrill exclamations he uttered from pain and rage, afforded him a horrible delight. At length, when the Beni-Flitas, from the loss of blood, remained as if he had fainted, the chaous passed a cord round his loins, and dragged him, thus mutilated, a few paces from the boundaries of the camp. The children collected branches of trees and some brambles, and set fire to them; the chaous then cast the Beni-Flitas, still breathing, upon the funeral pile! I heard, for a long time, groans and piercing cries. The night had come on. The flame from the pile spread a dull and sinister light to the very centre of the camp. The tents cast long shadows. More than one horseman, seated at his horse's feet, groaned over the events of the day. All around

me breathed sorrow and desolation. The flame shone some time longer. The Beni-Flitas struggled with death; his groans became less frequent; they rose, from time to time, like a mournful voice in the midst of night and darkness.

“Oh,” cried I, covering my head with my haick, “when will the day come when I shall no longer be a spectator of these barbarous and bloody scenes, which occur in the middle of this camp, at a few leagues from the stations occupied by the soldiers of our noble and generous nation !”

CHAPTER X.

MISERY.—A BATH.—THE MARABOOT OF THE FOUR TOWERS.—DESERTED COUNTRY.—NEW ENCAMPMENT.—DEPARTURE.—MOUNTAINS.—ARRIVAL AT TEKEDEMTA.—ABD-EL-KADER WISHES TO BUILD THIS TOWN.—LETTERS OF THE ARAB PRISONERS CARRIED TO MARSEILLES BY GENERAL BUGEAUD.—KINDNESS.—DESCRIPTION OF THE RUINS OF TEKEDEMTA.—SULTAN'S HAT.—CONVERSATION WITH ABD-EL-KADER.—HIS PROJECTS.—TUMULT IN THE CAMP.

SOME days after my arrival in the camp of Abd-el-Kader, I was covered with lice. The Arabs are infected by these vermin; the Sultan himself, in the midst of the most serious conversation, amuses himself in catching these animals on his haick, in rolling them gravely between his fingers, and throwing them on the carpet. I passed part of the day in company with Meurice, crouched in the sun, chasing these little insects. Fortunately, they did not take possession of either the hair of our heads or our beards; but they propagated by thousands upon every article of our dress. They are of a white colour and very large, and have a black streak on the back, which swells in proportion to the quantity of blood they have sucked from their unfortunate victims. They deposited their eggs in the seams of our trousers, which had a great resemblance to the lace which decorates the pantaloons of our *élégants*. The Arabs are so

accustomed to them, that they take no pains to rid themselves of them ; and when they observed Meurice and me in chase of these vermin, they attacked us with insults and raillery.

One day we asked Abd-el-Kader's permission to bathe in the Ouet-Mina ; we wished to rid ourselves of them in the water, and also to cleanse our bodies of the dust which covered them. The Sultan granted our request, and sent one of his negroes with us to protect us from the bad treatment of the Arabs. It is easy to imagine the pleasure and satisfaction we experienced, when, having entered the river, we felt our fatigued and heated bodies washed by the fresh and clear water. Two days afterwards the dust and the vermin had returned. We slept on the ground, the nights were cold, and when we pressed against each other to warm our benumbed limbs, they made themselves felt as soon as the warmth returned, and the blood began to circulate. They were like pins in every part of our bodies. We suffered dreadfully, and quickly desired the cold we had sought to guard against.

On the 11th Sept., the day after the battle, at sunrise, we broke up the camp, and directed our course to the south-east. We proceeded from day-break until three o'clock in the afternoon, by frightful roads, over mountains covered with mastic, ash, juniper trees, and holm oaks.

Ben-Faka pitched our camp upon an eminence ; the spot was beautiful. We saw the traces of the stay of the Beni-Flitas, who had left this neighbourhood to join the uncle of Abd-el-Kader. The

ground on which our tent was placed was a stubble, near to which flowed a tainted brook, which, however, preserved some degree of coolness around the eminence.

As soon as the gunners had fired the usual three shots, the horsemen, without giving their horses time to breathe, scattered themselves over the surrounding country, and hastened to discover and pillage the silos of the Beni-Flitas. They were not long before they returned, loaded with barley, wheat, and straw; but neither men, women, nor children, brought that night roast mutton or cous-coussou. The country is a desert, although it appears very favourable for the cultivation of wheat and barley. I am convinced that, with a little pains and labour, they might obtain abundant harvests. It is entirely free from trees.

When the horsemen had beaten the country on all sides, and were assured that the inhabitants had abandoned it, and had taken refuge with the rebel marabout in the fastnesses of the mountains; when Abd-el-Kader saw that nothing could be accomplished, and that he ran the risk of falling short of provisions, he determined to change the position of his camp. We journeyed about for some time, pitching and taking down our tents, without discovering an inhabited spot.

At last, on the 17th September, after an eight hours' march towards the south, we reached an inhabited district. Some few tribes brought horses and money to the Sultan, but these payments of taxes were rare, and of trifling amount. An Arab arrived

from Mascara with the following intelligence:—
“General Létang has left Oran; the Garabas have taken many oxen and sheep from the Douairs.”

The Arabs were greatly rejoiced at the check given the Douairs, and the horsemen fired, while galloping, many gun shots in honour of the victorious Garabas.

On the 19th September we struck our tent and set out. After about five hours' march, Ben-Faka made the troops halt upon the side of a mountain, in a fertile and well-cultivated spot. The camp was overlooked by a marabout (house of a holy man), the four angles of which were each flanked by a turret.

This country is populous. The fields are covered with wheat and barley crops. From the hill on which the marabout is built, they see the tents of the tribes, both on the plain and on the sides of the mountains.

Abd-el-Kader had for a long time entertained the project of rebuilding an ancient city named Tékédemta. To procure the means, and to obtain from the surrounding tribes provisions and assistance of every description during the reconstruction, he remitted them the payment of the impost, and expressed his desire to the Kait of receiving later, at Tékédemta, the supplies they intended bringing to the camp.

The next day, 20th September, we left the marabout with the four turrets, and after six hours' march arrived in the neighbourhood of Tékédemta. Without resting himself, while the troops were preparing

the next encampment, Abd-el-Kader changed his horse, and, accompanied by several marabouts, set off to visit the ruins of this city.

The country in which we had just arrived is hilly and uncultivated, and there is no trace of its being inhabited by any of the tribes. The mountains are very lofty, and covered with mastic, ash, juniper, and oak trees. The number and size of these trees (it is the only spot where I have seen the mastic *tree*, every where else I have found it merely a shrub) evidently prove that the Arabs have not inhabited this part of the country for a long time; for the spots where the tribes fix their residence are soon cleared of the trees which covered the ground before their arrival, and which the Arabs burn both for the purposes of cooking, and also by keeping up large fires, which the watchmen of the camps and tribes light during the night. These fires serve to protect them from the cold, and to keep off the wild beasts, which constantly prowl around their dwellings. They have, moreover, another practice, little adapted for preserving the forests. In order to open a passage in the mountains, they begin by setting fire to the underwood, and then to all the branches of the trees which impede their progress; the leaves and small branches being burnt, they then cut down the trunks.

Thus the strength and beauty of the trees which cover the mountains is a certain proof of the long absence of the Arabs from that spot.

The day of our encampment, many Moors ar-

rived from Mascara. They brought fifty asses, and carried baskets, mattocks, and every kind of instrument for digging the earth and building.

Abd-el-Kader returned to the camp, and immediately sent all his muleteers, and a party of his negroes, to the ruins of Tékédemta, with orders to clear the spot occupied by the ancient Casbah.

The next day he ordered a considerable number of his soldiers to set out to continue the clearing, and to construct a redoubt.

As the workmen were not paid, ill-will showed itself on all sides; the workmen and soldiers did not go to their work without murmuring. Abd-el-Kader was obliged to be present at the continuation of the work. It was even necessary for him to fulfil the duty of overlooker.

Whether from curiosity, or in obedience to Abd-el-Kader's orders, the Arabs of the neighbouring tribes brought to the camp grapes and quinces.

On the 26th, a courier brought Abd-el-Kader letters from the Arabs made prisoners by General Bugeaud at the battle of Trara-Shika, and whom they had transported to France. The news they gave produced a lively sensation in the camp; joy was painted on every countenance.

The Sultan summoned me, and said,

“ I have received letters from my Arabs; they are at Marseilles. The Christians treat them very well.”

“ And why then do you treat us ill? Why, when your subjects have only to rejoice at the good treatment of the French, do you leave us a

prey to the greatest misery, and exposed to the insults and blows of the soldiers? The distance from our friends renders us sufficiently unhappy. Why does a Sultan so powerful, so good, so holy as you, permit the bad treatment we suffer, under his very eyes? Your authority, your power, of which you boast so much, are then merely vain words. The nights are cold on these mountains, and we sleep on the ground. I am certain the Arabs sleep at Marseilles wrapped in warm coverings of wool, upon a good mattress, and we have not even a miserable carpet upon which to stretch ourselves during the night."

Abd-el-Kader smiled kindly, summoned Ben-Faka, and ordered him to give us all we should ask, and to let us have a carpet to sleep on. On the morning of the 27th, I entreated the Sultan to grant Meurice and myself permission to visit the ruins of Tékédemta, and the works commenced by the troops. He immediately replied we might go without fear; adding, that we should be accompanied by one of his negroes.

We set off, and, after an hour's walk, reached the ruins of Tékédemta.

The ground was covered with stones, and without any vegetation. Some portion of the wall which formerly surrounded a fortress was still standing. It was about seven cubits in thickness at the base; at a few feet from the ground it became narrower, and was not more than five cubits. Nine towers, of which the foundations are still visible, connected with the wall, but forming an

exterior projection, defended the approach. The enclosure was twelve hundred cubits in length, and nine hundred cubits in breadth.

We perceived, from the remains of the walls in the middle of the fortress, that the interior of the fort formerly enclosed several streets, into which opened houses and shops.

At several hundred paces from the citadel, we discovered, upon an elevated spot, the traces of the ancient Casbah (dwellings of the chiefs of cities, Beys—these palaces are usually surrounded with fortifications). It was upon these foundations that Abd-el-Kader intended to erect his new palace.

The camp was situated at the foot of a little hill, near the ruins, and a short distance from the spring. The Ouet-Mina flows at about ten minutes' walk from the ruins, below the eminence. This position is governed on every side by high mountains, except on the west; they reach the ruins on this side by a gentle acclivity. A road runs past it towards Mascara.

After having walked over the ruins, we approached the redoubt that Abd-el-Kader had caused to be erected. At two hundred paces to the east of the Casbah we perceived the Sultan, and near him his chief secretary, Ben-About, and Miloud Ben-Arrach, seated upon the earth which had been lately thrown up by the workmen, while digging the trench. It was not easy to distinguish him from the workmen by his costume, his dress was so simple.

He wore a large hat, plaited with the leaves of

dwarf palm. The flaps attached to the body of the hat, by woollen bands, ornamented with tassels, must have been three feet in diameter. It was about a foot and a half high, and in form resembled a reversed funnel.

I approached the Sultan, accompanied by Meurice. He saluted us gracefully, and with his accustomed smile, and made us a sign to be seated.

"To judge by the ruins," said I to Abd-el-Kader, "the town which formerly stood in this place must have been extensive and flourishing."

"Yes, it was very handsome, and very powerful!"

"Does the date of its foundation rise to a distant period?"

"Tékédemta is a very ancient city."*

"Do you think we should find any stones with inscriptions?"

"You will not find any; this has never been a Christian city.†

"It is one of the most ancient cities founded by the Arabs. The Sultans, my ancestors, who had fixed their residence at Tékédemta, have since ruled from Tunis to Morocco."

* I have said that Abd-el-Kader spoke a little French; but in our conversations he would never make use of any other language than Arabic. It was thus that I found out he knew Italian:—One day, as I was talking to one of the coral fishers, he happened to pass, and overheard me, and turning to Ben-Faka, said, "The Christian is now speaking Italian."

† By this expression, "Tékédemta has never been a Christian city," Abd-el-Kader wished to say, that we should find no trace of the Roman domination among the ruins. According to him, the Christians are the authors of the Latin inscriptions at Old Arzew.

“What is then your reason for disturbing these ruins, and forming from them the foundations of a new redoubt?”

“I wish to build up this city, and to make it greater and more flourishing than it has ever been under the rule of the Sultans, my ancestors. In the first place, I shall obtain a safe rampart against the attacks of the French; and when I shall have collected the tribes, secured and consolidated the magnificence of new Tékédemta, like a vulture I will pounce upon the Christians from this nest, so steep and difficult of approach; I will drive them from Algiers, from Bona, from Oran, and from all the places of which they have obtained possession.”

“It is folly in you to nourish this hope, and to entertain a project as ridiculous as difficult of execution. You know not then all the power of France. Our Sultan has but to speak the word, and we would pass your plains, climb your mountains; we would enclose you and yours in the deserts, where you would be burnt up by the sun. Go.”

“You are very insolent,” exclaimed Ben-About, suddenly interrupting this bombastic address; “you are in the power of the Sultan, and the chaous have not all remained in the camp.”

Abd-el-Kader smiled, and assumed an air of pity for me.

“You have no need to call to my recollection that I am prisoner,” replied I to Ben-About; “the lice which devour my body would quickly recal it to mind, if I should forget it for a second; but I also remember that Abd-el-Kader has told me, that

as long as I was in his power, I should not be exposed to any bad treatment.

“The Sultan has given me his word; he is great, good, and generous. Do not bridle up, Ben-About; what I am saying does not in any way concern you; of all the Arabs, Abd-el-Kader alone is great, good, and generous. He has assured me no evil should befall me; and confident in his word, I fear nothing.”

Abd-el-Kader looked at me with a smile, and said, “The Christians are fools; madmen: they wish to obtain possession of a country which is not theirs, and drive out the Arab, to whom it belongs. If the Christian was victorious, where, then, would the Arab go?”

“Our plains, our silos, our fields, our flocks, our mountains, our tents, our horses, our wives, our camels would be yours.

“And what would become of the country in which you were born? Why leave it, and come where you have no business, where Mahomet has placed his people? Does your Sultan know how to ride on horseback like Abd-el-Kader? Is your Sultan as great, as holy as Abd-el-Kader?”

“You are dogs! you never pray to God!

“Still, if you were satisfied with the coasts of Africa; if you restricted your occupation to Algiers, Oran, Bona, I might suffer you near me; for the sea does not belong to me; I have no vessels. But you wish the coasts, the plains, and the cities of the interior; you desire our mountains also.

“You are fools and madmen; you will never

possess Arabia. The foot of our horse is lighter, and more certain than the foot of yours. You will die with disease in our mountains, and those whom sickness shall not carry off, my horsemen will send death with their bullets.

“ You see it is not us, but you, who are fools and madmen.”

I did not reply to this pompous address ; I rose, and cast a glance over the works.

The labourers were digging a trench, enclosing a space of about forty square metres.* They cast the earth upon the spot on which the redoubt was to be erected, like we do when we raise small forts. This fortress was intended to lodge a garrison for the protection of travellers, and for the Arabs to retire to at night, to protect themselves from the hyenas and jackals.

This redoubt is placed upon an inclined plane ; it is overlooked by the ruins of the ancient fortress, and by an eminence from which the whole of the interior can be seen ; so that the garrison could be compelled to evacuate it, even without cannon.

After this rapid examination, we took leave of the Sultan, and proceeded, still accompanied by the negro, to walk over the ruins of the citadel.

The negro could not conceive what pleasure we could have in walking over a ground covered with stones. He looked upon us as fools, as dogs, and the whole time of our exploring he never ceased grumbling between his teeth, and overwhelming us with insults.

* Metre, three feet three inches.

At sunset we returned to the camp. On our arrival we heard a great tumult, and in the midst of a thick cloud of dust we perceived a multitude of Arabs, who seemed to be fighting among themselves. Some threw themselves on the ground, others flung themselves upon them; they all rolled on the ground, mutually striving to obtain the upper hand, accompanied by cries, insults, imprecations, and vigorous blows, distributed right and left by the chaos upon the backs of the rioters.

This commotion frightened us, and we hastened to our tent. When we reached it, we inquired the cause of the tumult.

The chaos had measured and distributed the barley to the horsemen. The distribution being finished, there remained in the middle of the circle a few measures for which there appeared no claimants. The Arabs had immediately rushed upon it; the trial was who should overthrow his neighbour, and obtain a few handfuls of grain. The chaos might strike about them as much as they pleased, the robbers were not to be turned from their purpose, and continued to struggle for the barley, with loud shouts and bursts of laughter.

Until to-day, the distribution of the rations had always taken place outside of the camp. Since then, Abd-el-Kader has ordered it to be made before his tent, which however does not prevent a repetition of the same scene at every distribution. At this moment the Sultan entered the camp; the chaos had great difficulty in opening a passage for him, through the midst of these plunderers.

Abd-el-Kader, without enquiring the cause of the disturbance, proceeded to his tent, regarding the thieves with a look of indifference.

I was seated, waiting our supper hour, when a marabout, cousin of Abd-el-Kader, precipitately entered our tent. I rose on seeing him, and dreaded, for a moment, from his terrified manner, that the Sultan, offended by my boldness, was about to inflict some punishment; but I was soon relieved from this apprehension.

"The Sultan has sent me," said he to me. "He has charged me to ask you if you will remain with him, and embrace our religion."

"No."

"You will be as powerful as the Sultan if you remain with us."

"I wish to return to the Christians."

"You will have wives, horses, arms, powder, much powder; you will be as rich, as great, as powerful as the Sultan."

"I will turn Mussulman if Abd-el-Kader will give me a ship, or vessel to command, I only accept it on this condition. I will go with the Italians to fish for coral on the coast of Cherchell, and will enrich the Sultan."

At this reply, whether it was that he had comprehended in what direction I should steer if my offers were accepted, or whether he desired to place me on an equality with the Sultan among the Arabs, the marabout retired without saying a word.

I had often been solicited by the Arabs to remain with them, but I never received official offers,

like those made me on this occasion, from Abd-el-Kader.

During our excursion to the ruins, the Arabs of the tribes situated half a day's march from Tékédemta, had brought couscoussou and roast sheep.

The men of Miliana had also brought pears, grapes, pomegranates, peaches, figs, and quinces. The prisoners had a share of all these provisions. Ben-Faka treated us sumptuously; he gave us cakes of white bread, some fruit, and a leg of roast mutton.

The cakes were supplied by the tribes. Abd-el-Kader had ordered them to bring some each day to the camp: they distributed them to the men employed in building and digging at Tékédemta. That was the only pay the Sultan's workmen received. When an Arab was going to work at the redoubt, he came to demand his ration of biscuit and white bread, saying, "I am going to work."

I had finished my excellent repast, when Ben-Faka, who came out of Abd-el-Kader's tent, said to me, "The Sultan wishes to speak to you."

I immediately proceeded to the tent of Abd-el-Kader, joyful and full of hope, without, however, knowing the subject which could lead to a conversation at that hour.

CHAPTER XI.

DISCUSSION WITH ABD-EL-KADER ON THE SUBJECT OF EXCHANGE OF PRISONERS.—LETTER TO GENERAL RAPATEL.—LETTER TO MY FAMILY.—FRIGHTFUL NIGHT.—NEW EXCURSION TO THE RUINS OF TEKEDEMTA.—WORKS.—ABD-EL-KADER'S POWDER MAGAZINE.—THE NEW REDOUBTS.—THE MEDAL.—ARAB JUMPERS IN THE CAMP.—ARAB SINGERS.—HYMNS.—THE ARABS AND ABD-EL-KADER BEFORE CIVILIZATION.—NEW TEKEDEMTA.—GAME.—MARCH.—GARRISON.—EIGHT PIECES OF CANNON.

As soon as Abd-el-Kader perceived me, he made me a sign to be seated.

“How are you?” (The Sultan never failed to inquire after my health.)

“Pretty well. The lice torment me; but I have a carpet at night, and I have dined well to-day.”

“Are you treated well?”

“Not too well.”

“Have you need of any thing?”

“To tell the truth, I am in want of every thing; but I have every thing you can give me.”

“I wish you to return to Algiers.”

“I do not desire any thing better.”

“I wish to exchange you.”

“You asked me just now if I was in want of any thing; you have guessed what I most wished.”

“What?”

“*Eh, parbleu !* my liberty.”

“You must write to the General. Ask him if

he will give, in exchange for you, three of the Arabs, prisoners at Marseilles, whom I shall point out."

The proposition of Abd-el-Kader caused me lively surprise. He did not mention the other prisoners, but merely spoke of my deliverance.

"If you do not include my companions in misfortune in the exchange, I will not write. How could you,—so great, so good, so generous,—how could you think I should ever consent to treat for my own exchange, if you did not, at the same time, include my companions in slavery?"

"Abd-el-Kader, these prisoners fell into your power before I did; I ought not to be freed before them; demand from the General a proper ransom for all the prisoners; then I will write."

"Later on, I shall see."

"But why do you wish to keep them?"

"I do not wish so keep them; when you reach Algiers you can speak of their exchange, and the matter will be soon concluded."

"I will not write for myself alone. Specify a ransom for Meurice, the four Italians, the man and the woman who are at Droma, and I will write, and will use all my endeavours with the General, to make him agree to whatever you may ask."

Abd-el-Kader consulted his secretaries and the marabouts who surrounded him, and replied,

"Write to the General, that I demand twenty Arab prisoners for Meurice; the four Italians and yourself. As for the four women, and the man who are at Droma, they are too far off; the long journey

would fatigue the women. As soon as you are exchanged, I will have them conducted to Oran."

"It will cost you no more to include these unhappy beings now. Do you think the hope of liberty, and the desire of seeing one's country, gives no strength? What are the fatigues of a journey, in comparison to the sufferings and miseries of captivity?"

"Very well; mention the man; but I forbid you to speak a word with regard to the women;—write."

"Since you are determined to keep the women, it is useless to speak of the man (Mons. Lauternier); he will never consent to be separated from his wife and daughter. He would prefer slavery with them, to liberty, while they mourned their captivity in the prisons at Droma. I will speak no more of him."

I immediately wrote to the Lieutenant-General Baron Rapatel, commander of the troops at Algiers, and conveyed to him Abd-el-Kader's proposition.

When my letter was finished, Abd-el-Kader asked if I wished to write to my family. As I hesitated, the Sultan, who perceived it, said, "Fear nothing; write what you please; no one here will read your letter." He then gave me wax to seal it, and I wrote the second letter.

"You see," said the Sultan to me, "I give him your letters; they will go off immediately to Algiers."

I retired, very well satisfied with the good disposition of Abd-el-Kader, and returned to our tent, very much rejoiced at what I had obtained.

Meurice, who awaited my return with impatience, assailed me with numberless questions. I told him of Abd-el-Kader's resolution, and the letter I had written to General Rapatel.

It would be impossible to describe his joy and thankfulness; he laughed, he wept, thanked me. His happiness affected me; we promised each other mutual assistance, both in good and bad fortune. We talked of our country, of our friends, of liberty, of hope; we looked far into futurity; we saw our deliverance, our return to Algiers, the oblivion of all our sufferings. Full of these delightful images, we laid ourselves down to sleep. I looked for our carpet; it had been taken away; I wished to go and mention the circumstance to Abd-el-Kader, but he was at prayers; I was compelled to content myself with allowing part of my disappointment and ill-humour to evaporate in an energetic exclamation. I then threw myself on the ground, and sought for sleep to dissipate my indignation. But how to get to sleep?—The cold was excessive, and a tremendous tempest burst forth in the middle of the night; the next morning we were wet to the skin.

On the 29th, Abd-el-Kader sent Miloud-Ben-Arrach, and his cavalry, on an expedition of observation, in the direction of Mousthaganem. He granted us permission to return to the ruins of Tékédemta, and to pursue our researches. A part of the labourers were occupied in transporting stones with the mules from the camp, and in collecting the materials for the Casbah of Abd-el-Kader;

others carried moistened earth, resembling cement, to unite the stones; others worked at the redoubt.

The tribes of the neighbourhood had charge of the waggons, and we saw them arrive every day, loaded with provisions, leading oxen dragging pieces of wood. There was no lime to be found except at half a day's journey; Abd-el-Kader sent some Moors to the spot to prepare it.

I remarked ten soldiers occupied in clearing an ancient cistern, about one hundred and fifty paces to the east of the casbah. I have subsequently learnt that Abd-el-Kader had placed there iron, lead, powder, saltpetre, and sulphur. It is his grand magazine for the necessaries of war. To escape all suspicion he has had the entrance built up, and erected a kind of hut before it in the form of a guard-house.

The implements of the Arabs are very bad, with the exception of a few shovels and pickaxes, which they have stolen from us.

Abd-el-Kader was in the midst of his labourers, who were working at the redoubt. As soon as he perceived me, he asked me what I thought of the fortifications he was erecting.

I replied to him that they were very extensive and well directed; that it was easy to perceive he had examined our fortresses during the peace.

The Sultan appeared very well satisfied with my answer. He would have been much less so if I had told him all I thought.

The ditches were not dug of an equal depth throughout; the breadth varied considerably, and

the sides presented inequalities. The redoubt was placed upon an inclined plane, and they had not contrived any opening for the escape of the water. A few branches of the mastic tree and laurel-rose, planted horizontally, were the only supports which served to connect and bind the earth together. The winter is very severe in the mountains, and it is more than probable that, as a consequence of the long rains, the waters have dragged down the earth, thus so badly supported, into the trenches, and that the redoubt of the Sultan presents at this moment the appearance of a miserable heap of mud.

One of the Italians (these three unfortunate men also worked at the new constructions,) left the group of labourers, and presented me with an Arab medal, which he had found while digging the ground. I showed it to Abd-el-Kader.

“Is this an Arabian coin?”

“Yes.”

“Is it very old?”

“It is very ancient.”

“Why do you compel the Italians to work?”

“Why? are they not accustomed to work, and must they not gain their food!”

“But they are fishermen, and not labourers; why treat them so harshly? They have done you no ill; you are not at war with their nation; why retain them prisoners? In this instance your conduct does not agree with your great reputation for holiness and goodness.”

“I am at war with every power; I have no ports;

their friendship is useless to me. Besides, is not the army of your Sultan filled with soldiers who speak a language different from your own?

“These soldiers are deserters. They have left their country, they have come to serve under our flag of their own accord, and have not been sent by their sultan; if they returned to their own country they would be shot. Thus you are wrong in declaring war against every power.”

“I am the strongest and greatest of sultans, and fear not the enmity of the others. Take back your medal.”

I left the redoubt, and descended with Meurice to the banks of the Ouet-Mina.

On entering the camp, we perceived a numerous assembly. As we were never safe among the Arabs, we hastened to gain our tent; when once in safety, we inquired the cause of the crowd. At last we saw haicks floating in the air, then men perched one upon another's backs.

They were mountebanks, who were jumping before the troops of the camp.

I had been present at Toulon, at the Arab exercises, which were to be seen last year at Paris. I explained to Meurice their tricks, but we could not distinguish their evolutions.

The next day, when the Sultan returned from the works, the tumblers gave a second exhibition. This day we saw them well. They formed the human pyramid; they flung themselves in a somerset over the heads of men holding naked swords in their hands; they performed the same tricks we

had seen their countrymen execute in the principal theatres of France. Meurice greatly admired their boldness, their strength, their suppleness, and their agility; but I did not think them equal to the Bedouins I had seen at Toulon.

The Arabs watched their motions with much interest and attention. When the exercises were finished, one of the tumblers went round the circle, and although this scared many away, he nevertheless collected a number of small pieces of coin.

Other amusements succeeded.

Every evening an Arab squatted before Abd-el-Kader's tent, and sang for whole hours together. The soldiers of the camp surrounded him, and lent an attentive ear to the monotonous and trivial melody. I have not been able completely to seize the words; but, from a few phrases I caught, I thought I could recognise religious or patriotic hymns. They have the cadence and the rhyme of poetry. The ideas which follow frequently returned.

“The Sultan is great, and Mahomet is greater.

“The Sultan is great; he is good, generous, he is holy.

“The marabouts of Mecca are very great and very holy.

“The Sultan has beautiful horses.

“The Sultan has many horses; and they are all excellent.

“The Sultan has immense treasures, and much powder.

“ The Arabs have fertile plains.

“ They have mountains covered with forests, from whence flow many rivers.

“ We have beautiful women.

“ Our horses are light, and no other animal runs so swiftly as they.

“ Our camels are strong.

“ We have large droves of oxen and sheep.

“ Our guns are good.

“ We have powder ;

“ Much powder.

“ Pay vows, that the Christians may die.

“ Much powder !”

A marabout, a friend of Ben-Faka, came to our tent every evening, and sung thus for whole hours. His voice was so harsh and shrill, and the burden of his song so monotonous, that it was one of our greatest annoyances to have our ears a prey, for a part of the night, to this stunning psalmody.

Meurice had an excellent voice. He sometimes sung before the Arabs, at one time a romance of Bruguère, at another time a song of Beranger, but his hearers were little sensible to his melody ; they gave the preference by far to their guttural and drawling notes, the rude and coarse phrases of their songs.

This aversion for every thing belonging to Europeans, under every form, does not spring solely from the horror which our religious faith causes them, but also from that instinct which makes the uncivilized and barbarous man shrink from all modifications, from all changes which the

contact with a more civilized nation would necessarily cause in his customs, manners, and habits of life. Thus, although possessed of prodigious activity and great vigour, we nevertheless find in the Arabs, as in all other barbarous nations, an indolence, a sloth, an apathy, which nothing can disturb. The Arab will make a long journey on horseback during an expedition, he will endure the greatest privations without murmuring, and without expressing the least regret, the least wish. He will fight like a lion, provided he attacks. He will endure cold, heat, hunger, rain, watchings, without yielding; but when, on his return to his tribe, he has unsaddled his horse, and hung up his gun, his pistols, and yataghan to the posts of his tent, he will remain for days crouched in the sun, without disquieting himself about the morrow, in smoking, as if absorbed in very grave deliberations. A horse, a gun, powder, a haick, some acorn flour, and some barley, that is all that an Arab requires to make his life happy. Let civilization come, bringing in its train wealth, religion, elegance, daily toil, art in all its beautiful forms, the desire of improvement—the Arab would stand a moment before the door of his tent, struck by the glorious spectacle which presented itself before his eyes; but traditions have been silent for ages, they have not reclined on the carpet where he slept when a child, they have not related to him the history of ancient times, they have not told him of Sultans who were great conquerors, of the pomp and splendour of their imperial cities. A single word

has rung on his ear—Mahomet! The prophet has commanded him to hate the Christians.

He will struggle to repel them. If he fails in this undertaking, he will retire like a wild beast to the fastnesses of the mountains, or conceal his wild independence in the inaccessible plains of the desert.

And we must not take as an exception the personal valour of Abd-el-Kader, and the intentions and projects of this chief. The sultan is not a reformer; he does not seek to reform the institutions of the prophet, nor to change the manners of the Arabs. If he opposes a long resistance to the French, it is not for the purpose of forming a wandering and undisciplined people to war, nor of sowing, after the victory he each day predicts, the seeds of improvement and civilization in this rich and fertile country. Abd-el-Kader is ambitious. He desires to reign at any price. Without the French colonization, he would have been all his life merely a simple marabout. He owes his elevation to the miseries of his country. These lend him the qualities of a superior man. In his camp, Abd-el-Kader distinguishes himself from the other Arabs by his kindness, his self-confidence, his boldness, and his address; but place this hero among us, and you will find him ignorant, despotic, and improvident.

At this moment the Sultan is falling back before the French invasion. He is rebuilding the town of Tékédemta, in order to transport to his new city he inhabitants of Mascara. He resembles the tiger

pursued across the plain by expert huntsmen, which seeks a den in the mountains to escape the balls of his assailants.

Tékédemta is a bad district; the temperature which reigns in these mountains is very cold. The 2d October, it has frozen in our tents.

At six hours' march from the ruins, towards the south, we find well cultivated and thickly inhabited plains.

The tribes bring every day to Tékédemta a considerable quantity of barley and grain.

There was no grass for the camels at Tékédemta, or in the neighbourhood. Abd-el-Kader sent them to the plains in the south, where they found a proper and abundant pasture.

If the French ever push an expedition as far as Tékédemta, they must never forget, if they take camels, to carry with them food for their support, otherwise they would soon die of hunger in these defiles.

Game abounds in these mountains. At every step we start hares, rabbits, partridges, thrushes, blackbirds, red partridges (on the backs of which the plumage is blue), wild pigeons, and doves. The wild boars are numerous in marshy places. The soldiers, without Abd-el-Kader's knowledge, began to eat the game. The market which has been established at Tékédemta is full of it.

The stream of the Ouet-Mina is abundantly supplied with fish. We found in this river, and in all those which water this district, an immense number of river tortoises. They live in the mud, send forth

a fetid odour, and have a detestable taste ; whereas the land tortoises, which are almost as numerous, when well cooked, form a delicious dish. The soldiers began fishing for their support. Abd-el-Kader continued the labours of the redoubt with great ardour and activity. Fifty workmen, carpenters and masons, were employed at the construction. To celebrate the inauguration of the new Tékédemta, the Sultan had the piece of cannon conveyed to the redoubt. They loaded it with stones, and fired three shots, so badly directed, that the stones fell in the camp, and nearly killed both men and horses.

At each shot the marabouts and workmen exclaimed, "Great Sultan !"

Abd-el-Kader has since sent from Mascara to the redoubt of Tékédemta, seven cannons, six and eight pounders. They are old Spanish pieces, one worse than the other, mounted upon bad carriages, of Arabian make, and moved upon small wheels of solid wood. These cannon have been spiked, and their touch-holes are about a dozen lines in circumference.

Before leaving Tékédemta, where I have never returned, I wish to add a few facts of which I have not been witness, but of which I can guarantee the correctness, as I derive them from good authority. Fifteen or twenty families of Mascara have, by the Sultan's orders, transported themselves to Tékédemta. The population of Mascara will determine with great regret and reluctance, upon emigrating to a cold, unhealthy country, scantily supplied

with provisions, which have to be brought on the backs of mules from a day's march to the south. The eatables brought to market are very dear.

Abd-el-Kader has established a garrison of a hundred men in the redoubt. They are changed every month, and each detachment, on going to occupy this post, carries a supply of biscuit and barley for the month.

The ruins of Tékédemta cover a considerable space. They show the past splendour of this ancient city; but the times in which this city flourished are long gone by, for the descendants of the men who dug the foundations and raised the walls cannot tell the prisoner or traveller the names of the Sultans who established their residence in these mountains.

Abd-el-Kader is stirring up these remains in hopes of blowing into life the embers of a great nation. He wishes to repeople this vast solitude, and to lay the foundations of an imperial city, from whence he will rule the whole of the province of Algiers. The Sultan Abd-el-Kader is cunning, crafty, and courageous; but it requires something more than courage and craft to found an empire, to resist the attacks of a nation as powerful as France, and drive back her soldiers to the coasts.

The eight pieces of cannon will in vain have defended the redoubt: before the walls of new Tékédemta are completed, the French artillery will brush away the miserable huts which at present form the whole city.

Abd-el-Kader, when I predicted this to you, you told me I was a madman. However, is it not true that the experienced hunter does not amuse himself in chasing through the woods and plains the tiger which flies before him, but awaits him in his haunt, and when the ferocious animal has retired to his den, the ball which carries death misses not; for the space is narrow, and the tiger expires in the very spot he thought a secure asylum against the pursuit and shot of his enemies.

CHAPTER XII.

DEPARTURE.—ENCAMPMENT.—THE CONVOY OF LIME.—DEPARTURE.—
MISFORTUNE OF THE CORAL FISHERS.—CRUEL SEPARATION.—
DESCRIPTION OF THE PLAIN WATERED BY THE OUET-MINA.—
SHELLS.—DEPARTURE.—A STAG.—ENCAMPMENT.—RUINS.—ARRI-
VAL AT TEKNIFIL.—REPORT OF AN EXPEDITION OF GENERAL
LETANG.—THE SULTAN SETS OUT WITH HIS CAVALRY TO WATCH
HIS MOTIONS.—THE FIVE MARABOUTS.—FUNERAL CEREMONIES.
—I CONTRIVE CHESSMEN AND CARDS.—DEPARTURE FOR MASCARA.

WE soon recommenced our wandering life. On the 30th September, at sunrise, Abd-el-Kader gave the order for departure. The baggage being loaded, we set out, leaving Tékédemta, which I was not destined to see again.

We passed on our left a large well wooded mountain, at half a league's distance towards the south. After two hours' march we entered a desert country; the sky was cloudless, the road was difficult, and intersected at every step by ravines. We still had the wooded mountain on our left; when, after two hours' journey, Ben-Faka made the signal for halting, and the Arabs pitched the camp upon the right bank of the Ouet-Mina.

Abd-el-Kader sent his muleteers to the mountain, where the Moors had prepared the lime. They loaded the mules, carried the first load to Tékédemta, and returned to the camp long before night. The next day (1st October), at the moment

we were about to depart, I stopped before the Sultan's tent, and as I was looking at the negroes folding the covering and carpets, and loading them on the mules, I perceived Ben-Faka carrying under his arm three haicks, and followed by the three Italians. I drew near the fishermen, and asked them where they were going.

I did not hear their reply.

Ben-Faka, in a voice trembling with anger, ordered me imperiously to move on, and mount my mule.

Sinister presentiments as to the fate of the unfortunate men made me sorrowful. What new tortures awaited these unhappy men? I saw, from a distance, Ben-Faka distribute to them the three haicks. They ought to have been clad some time before; they had nothing on them except a ragged linen shirt. My three companions in misfortune took the road to Tékédemta. The Sultan sent them to the works; and, in his generous solicitude, had ordered Ben-Faka to throw a haick over their shoulders; without which they would inevitably have died of cold, in so severe and unhealthy a climate.

On their arrival at Tékédemta, these poor Italians endured the worst treatment, and underwent privations of every description. One of them sunk under the sufferings. Their misery was such that the recital would appear incredible. As for me, who knew the Arabs, I placed implicit faith in all the two fishermen related to me on their return.

But let me not anticipate the course of events.

I mounted my mule, my heart penetrated with sorrow. This separation was horrible. They were prisoners like we were; their misfortune was our own. These poor sailors, I loved them! Like me, whom they called their Lieutenant, they had endured hunger, had been beaten, had been exposed to the cold and the rain. We used to converse of our country, of our sufferings, of our hatred of the Arabs; we hoped together.

Every thing was common between us, fear, joy, regret, grief, and hope. We exclaimed together, "Home! liberty!" During our stay at Tékédemta, I rose one night, and stole from Ben-Faka's sacks some bread and dried figs. The next day I went with Meurice to wash in the fountain, where the Italians joined us. There I distributed my provisions; we breakfasted together, and talked of our country.

One of these Italians, Francesco, expressed only one wish; that was, to eat macaroni, and to have a day's fishing at Algiers. I never found a fisherman who regretted in so lively a manner his wandering life on the Mediterranean, his boat, and his nets. The breakfast finished, these good fellows washed our clothes, and dressed our wounds.

We set off on the 1st October at daybreak, and proceeded in an easterly direction, having still on our left, to the south, at a league's distance, the lofty wooded mountain, and after three hours' march, Ben-Faka had the camp pitched on the left bank of the Ouet-Mina, upon an eminence covered with silos, which were all empty.

We did not see a single Arab or tent. The horsemen were obliged to go three or four hours' march from the camp to seek some barley for their horses.

On the 4th October we raised the camp for the third time since our departure from Tékédemta. We marched at only half a league's distance from the wooded mountain. Ben-Faka placed our camp in a small plain on the further side of a little stream which flows into the Ouet-Mina; it was not cultivated. The Ouet-Mina intersects it, and waters it in all directions. During the winter it has the appearance of a lake. The ground is covered with shrubs, which resemble brambles and thorns, and which produce very excellent fruit, like the medlar in colour, but not so large, and enclosing a kernel. The soldiers eat a great number of them.

These bushes, like all the other shrubs of this country, are covered with snails, which fasten themselves to the bark by means of their slime. When very hot, they turn their backs to the sun. Nature, in its admirable and infinite foresight, has formed their shells of so fine and clear a white, reflecting so well the rays of the sun, that these molluscæ scarcely feel the greatest heat of summer. The quantity of animals in shells is so great on this plain, that an army which happened to be here without provisions, might live upon the fruit, shrubs, fish of the Ouet-Mina, the snails (*lactea et candidissima*), without fear of want or famine.

The next day, the 5th October, we resumed our

journey towards the east. We had left the banks of the Ouet-Mina, which flows on towards the north, the woody mountain was still to the south of us.

The advanced guard started a stag; the horsemen who escorted the baggage immediately set off in pursuit of it. The stag, with its nose in the air, fled with the rapidity of a bird, and soon disappeared among the bushes at the foot of the high mountain.

Many deer and stags are doubtless to be found upon the sides of this mountain; but in that of Tékédemta, as in the higher regions, the cold prevents the establishment of these animals.

After a march of ten hours, we stopped upon an eminence covered with stones, which we thought might be the ruins of a city. We asked Abd-el-Kader and his marabouts, who replied they had never heard of a city existing on this spot.

On the 6th October, after a march of two hours, Ben-Faka ordered the camp to be pitched on the last eminence which borders the plain of Mascara, on the eastern extremity, at a spot named Teknifil, near to which were five marabouts, upon five different hills, near each other. We learnt that the French had left Oran, and that General Letang was directing his course towards El-Borgj, two leagues to the north of Teknefil.

Abd-el-Kader immediately set out for that village with all his cavalry, and compelled the inhabitants to abandon it.

The next day we saw the baggage, herds, wives,

and children of the tribes of Borgia arrive in the plain. The inhabitants of Mascara, situated four leagues from Teknifil, also made preparations for evacuating that place, by the Sultan's orders. We remained at Teknifil fourteen days, during which time Abd-el-Kader followed the French army in the plains of Macta.

He had collected all the tribes still faithful to his cause; his army consisted of from five to six thousand Arabs.

Every morning, couriers bringing bad news arrived at the camp. At one time the French army, surrounded on all sides, could not retire either to Oran or Mousthaganem, at other times the Sultan had cut our troops in pieces.

The Arabs who remained in the camp overwhelmed us, on the arrival of each intelligence, with blows, insults, and threats of death.

Moreover, we were very badly fed; the only nourishment they gave us was some chicha (boiled barley) and some execrable barley bread. They killed no sheep, and the tribes carried to the army the supplies which were usually brought to the camp. The despair and discouragement which Abd-el-Kader's kindness had banished for a time then returned more severely than ever.

We sometimes went as far as the five marabouts. In an embankment formed by five small hills, is a very abundant spring, which fills a large reservoir dug by the hands of man. Trenches led the water through the plain, and fertilize it by numerous canals; they traverse our camp in every direction,

although situated a hundred and fifty paces from the spring, to which a very considerable number of animals come every evening. This position, which is very fine, would be a very favourable situation for a large agricultural establishment.

The plain which spreads at the foot of the eminence is rich and productive; it is covered with tents, before which are seen large stacks of straw. It seemed to me that one half of it was cultivated, the other half served as pasture land for horses, oxen, and sheep.

On returning, we heard mournful lamentations uttered by some Arab women collected at the feet of a marabout: they had just assisted at an interment.

The Arabs, when one of their relations die, collect together; they bury the dead body in the cemetery, which is near the marabout. They cover the tomb with stones, which they take care to place straight, and in regular lines, and pass several hours of the day near the grave, filling the air with mournful cries and plaintive exclamations.

Adversity, they say, makes men industrious. During our stay at Teknefil I had an opportunity of verifying this proverb.

The days were long and dreary. The absence of Abd-el-Kader caused great disorder in the camp, which was only occupied by his infantry. The Arabs abused the prisoners; they had separated Meurice and me from the coral fishers. We always conversed of our hopes, of our country, of our families; but by constantly referring to the

same subjects, we exhausted them, and deep dejection took possession of our spirits.

The idea came into my head to make chessmen and cards, to shorten the hours. I immediately commenced, and succeeded pretty well.

I have said that eight chests, containing Abd-el-Kader's reserve ammunition, were placed in the corner of our tent. As soon as Ben-Faka left the tent, my greatest pleasure was in wetting the powder. If they had surprised me I should have been beaten or killed, but I preferred running the risk, and having the satisfaction of spoiling our enemies' ammunition. I stole one of the boards of these chests, and traced the squares upon it. I collected branches of the laurel rose, and with the assistance of a knife succeeded in carving and forming the chessmen. I also stole several sheets of paper (Ben-Faka had me punished for all these thefts by blows of the stick), and drew a piquet pack of cards. The knaves were jockeys, with pipes in their mouths, and having red, green, yellow, and white waistcoats. The queens were women, dressed *à la Française*; the one with a bonnet on her head, another with a turban, a third without any ornament, and a fourth with her hair in ringlets, in the English fashion. The kings, with double heads, wore large crowns. Chess and these cards afforded us a pleasant distraction.

Ben-Faka and Ben-About, having charge of watching over Abd-el-Kader's tent during his absence, sent me there with Meurice to pass a part of the day. Although we were Christians, and

slaves, they had more confidence in us than in the Arabs of the camp.

They also entreated us to keep a good watch, and warn off the soldiers who might have a desire to rob or pillage the chests and effects of the Sultan.

They had taken away the sofa and cushions. We were warned not to touch any thing, as Christians could not lay their hands on any thing belonging to the Sultan without defiling it. Then, seated on the carpet of this august and holy habitation, we passed our time in playing at chess and piquet.

The marabouts, although manifesting a great disdain for the human figures I had drawn, did not the less express their admiration when they saw the knaves and queens. Those who had been to Oran and Algiers were struck with the truth and exactitude with which I had copied the European costume.

The Arab cards are quite different to ours. The marabouts were very anxious to comprehend the game of piquet, and every time we played annoyed us with questions.

I have seen draughts in the cafés of the camp at Mascara, at Tékédemta, and at Miliana, but never chessmen.

One day, Abd-el-Kader seeing me play chess with Meurice, said,

“I have seen my grandfather play with pieces like those, upon the squares of a draught-board.”

At length, on the 20th of October, after a halt of fourteen days at the five marabouts, during which

we were exposed to threats, blows, and the most cruel privations, we struck our tents.

A courier arrived at the camp in the middle of the night; he announced that the French had directed their march to the coast of Oran, and that the Sultan would be at Mascara on the morning of the 21st.

In spite of the late hour (it was midnight), Ben-Faka ordered the troops and conductors of the baggage to set out. The weather was cold and wet, and a thick mist filled the atmosphere; we suffered much, and I am perfectly persuaded the cold and damp laid the foundation of Meurice's illness, under which he sank.

Whilst we were on the way, seated upon the mules which carried the sultan's chests, we heard the voice of Ben-Faka every quarter of an hour.

"France, Meurice," cried he, "are you still on the mules?"

"Yes."

"Yes."

"Do not dismount."

"No."

"Above all, do not change your animals with the horsemen."

"Be satisfied."

Ben-Faka's uneasiness was not groundless. Having charge of the camp, he was responsible for all the disorders which might occur on the way; he also dreaded we might dismount, and some of the escort, taking advantage of our inattention, might force open the Sultan's coffers, and pillage his treasure.

The confidence which Ben-Faka honoured us with, in placing under our charge the riches of Abd-el-Kader, flattered us exceedingly. These Christians, overwhelmed with insults and blows, these dogs, ill-treated and covered with dirt, were still considered more honest and faithful by the mistrustful Ben-Faka than the proud Arab horsemen. We had scrupulously watched in the tent of the sultan at Teknifil, and we had the happiness of arriving at our new encampment with our mules and the treasures they carried untouched.

The day had not yet broken. Ben-Faka placed our camp at the foot of a mountain which borders the plain of Mascara to the north.

The first rays of the sun discovered the beautiful town of Mascara.

CHAPTER XIII.

ENCAMPMENT AT THE GATES OF MASCARA.—RETURN OF THE SULTAN.
—MILITARY HONOURS.—JOY.—ABD-EL-KADER GOES TO VISIT HIS
WIFE.—THE SULTAN'S WIFE.—ZAKA, CHIEF ATTENDANT, IS AR-
RESTED.—HE IS CONDEMNED TO BE PUT IN IRONS.—HIS ESCAPE.
—HE IS RETAKEN.—DREADFUL PUNISHMENT.—HOW ABD-EL-KA-
DER ADMINISTERS JUSTICE.—HASSEN GIVES ME A FEW DETAILS
RESPECTING THE SULTAN'S EXPEDITION.—FALSEHOODS.—LETTER
OF GENERAL BARON RAPATEL.—PROPOSALS OF EXCHANGE.—
REPLY.—JOY.—GRIEF.

I HAVE said the camp was pitched at the foot of the mountain which borders the plain of Mascara on the north. A small stream, which falls through the city, and which waters in its course numerous gardens, filled with fruit-trees of every description, particularly almond-trees, traversed the camp; the banks were covered with laurel rose trees.

Mascara is situated in the middle of a mountain defile, upon a little hill, difficult and steep of ascent. The houses of Mascara rise, white and smiling, from the midst of a grove of Barbary fig-trees; some poplars rise over the city, and wave over the roofs of the houses like superb "aigrettes;" the lofty and slender minaret of the mosque shone, like a lance planted in the middle of a camp, graceful and glittering in the sun, amidst the tufted foliage of the fig and poplar trees.

Mascara presents a delightful appearance. I stole a sheet of paper, and went a few paces from the outer tents, for the purpose of sketching it. I had scarcely commenced my task, when a chaou on horseback perceived me, rode towards me, and applied a blow of a stick to my shoulders, and I, to escape a repetition, started off quickly to our tent, with my unfinished sketch in my hand.

A courier brought the news to the camp of the arrival of Abd-el-Kader. The infantry took their arms, and set out about ten minutes' distance along the Mascara road; they then formed double file; Mouftar marshalled his cavalry in two ranks, behind the lines of the infantry.

As Abd-el-Kader passed the first soldiers, both horse and foot broke their order, and hastened to place themselves in two lines before his tent. At the moment he entered it, three cannon-shot, fired at Mascara, announced to the neighbouring tribes the return of the Sultan, and his presence in his camp. The infantry and cavalry fired numerous volleys of musquetry, in rejoicing over the great victory the Sultan had obtained over the French. The camp, throughout the day, presented the appearance of unusual disorder and commotion. The horsemen of the surrounding tribes, whom Abd-el-Kader had dragged on his expedition, returned in crowds, stopped merely to feed their horses, and set out again; there was a continual going and coming. In addition to the continued influx of strangers, imagine the joy, the pride, the shouts of both horsemen and foot. The whole day was

passed in racing of horses, firing of guns, and noisy clamours.

At sunset, Abd-el-Kader, followed by some of the chief marabouts, mounted his horse, and proceeded, accompanied by his thirty negroes, to the tent of his wife.

This tent is situated three-quarters of a league to the south of Mascara, in a spot where Abd-el-Kader possesses a marabout and a garden.

The chiefs who accompanied Abd-el-Kader have also tents, under which dwell their wives, with their father, mother, and such of their relations as do not belong to the army. This reunion of tents forms a kind of women's camp.

The tent of Abd-el-Kader's wife is black—a weft of camel's hair. Abd-el-Kader is, they say, a very loving husband; his conduct proves it; he has not a single concubine. His wife is very handsome; her tall and slender form, which shows to advantage under the folds of her haick, fastened round her waist by a woollen girdle, distinguishes her above the other women. In general, the Arabs prefer stout, lusty women: Abd-el-Kader has a different taste. His frequent absences for three or four months do not diminish in the least the tenderness and strength of his attachment. When we were on the banks of the Ouet-Mina, he sent his wife fruits, butter, honey, and all the rarest and best provisions.

She has presented him with a little girl; they say she bore a son on the very day the French entered Mascara. I have never heard it mentioned;

if Abd-el-Kader had ever really had a son, the Arabs would have mentioned it to me.

During the night, the thirty negroes keep guard, that nothing may interrupt the amours of the Sultan; in their absence from the camp, the infantry supply their place around his tent.

In the middle of the night, a hand quietly raised the curtains of the tent; a man protruded his head,—listened with attention,—cast a rapid glance around him, and suddenly darted forth. The sentinels, who were not asleep, seized Zaka, Abd-el-Kader's chief attendant.

Zaka was a negro, and a very old slave; he had for a very long time taken advantage of the moments of the Sultan's leaving his tent, to introduce himself into it, and steal at his ease the revenue of the imperial treasure.

Impunity seemed to have cast her ægis over all his thefts. The thirty negroes, whether from the confidence which the character and high functions of Zaka inspired them with, or from not wishing to betray a brother, had never detected him, although they had seen him issue more than once, at unseasonable hours, and always in the Sultan's absence, from a spot where he could have no business.

But the Arab soldiers showed themselves much less accommodating.

At the rising of the sun, Abd-el-Kader had already returned to the camp.

They led Zaka before him, and showed him several sultanins (silver coin) found upon his person.

The coffee makers bore witness that Zaka had for some time spent large sums at their cafés. No day passed without his treating his friends. They found in his tent haicks, bernous, yataghans, and magnificent pistols.

Every one was acquainted with his uncertain and limited income. Where had he found the money to pay for these articles, and the amount of his daily expenditure?

Abd-el-Kader condemned him to be fettered, without fixing the period of his enlargement.

He was conducted to our tent and confided to the charge of his old friend, Ben-Faka, who answered for his prisoner.

They did not fasten the iron rod connecting the two rings which enclose the legs of the sufferer with a padlock, as the punishment was to be of long duration; but the chaous riveted a nail, instead of a padlock, to the end of the cross bar.

On seeing Zaka stretched out, with the irons on his feet, I could not help saying to him with a smile,

“You are taken, then?”

“Yes.”

“Do you deserve it?”

“No.”

“How! did you not steal?”

“Never.”

“What assurance! But you have never entered this tent to visit your friend, Ben-Faka, without stealing fruit, bread, or cakes.”

"That is a different thing ; I was hungry. Like the camel, the Arab picks up his food wherever he passes."

"You are now bound in a manner to prevent you stirring ; you will not steal any more fruit, bread, or sultanins."

"I shall soon be in a large garden ; the trees will hang down to my face, their boughs loaded with fruit."

During this conversation, Ben-Faka, summoned by his duty into the tent of Abd-el-Kader, had gone out. Zaka dragged himself upon the bales, took refuge at the bottom of the tent, and allowed himself to fall to the ground, like a man overcome with fatigue, and pretended to sleep.

Meurice watched all his movements with the greatest attention.

"The negro," said he, "is attempting to escape."

"He is asleep."

"Rather say, he is pretending to sleep : he is trying to escape."

"But he is fastened by both feet."

"No matter. Watch his manœuvre."

Zaka unhooked a gun, which he placed upon two bales ; he took off his black bernou, spread it over the gun, and crouched beneath it.

I left the tent, and a short time afterwards I saw him traversing the camp, covered with his white haick, and trying to conceal his face. He walked slowly ; but as soon as he had passed the limits, he

began to run, and soon disappeared among the fig trees on the mountain.

Ben-Faka, on his return, discovered the escape of the prisoner committed to his charge, and for whom he was personally responsible. He was greatly enraged, and overwhelmed us with insults, struck us, as accomplices of Zaka, and for not having warned some one of his attempts to escape.

A hundred horsemen immediately mounted and dispersed around the camp.

Ben-Faka wished to conceal from the Sultan Zaka's escape. He hoped to lay hands on his prisoner before the news of his flight and of his capture could reach him. But the horsemen had not returned, a half-hour had elapsed since their departure, when a chaou announced to him that the Sultan wished to speak with him.

Ben-Faka was proceeding towards Abd-el-Kader's tent, when he perceived Zaka in the middle of a guard of horse, his hands tied behind his back. He took possession of his prisoner, and entered with him into Abd-el-Kader's presence.

Without any form of process, the Sultan condemned Zaka to irons for an indefinite period, and to receive for three successive days, each day at three different times, six hundred blows of the stick; two hundred blows at seven o'clock in the morning, two hundred at mid-day, and two hundred at eight o'clock at night; in all, eighteen hundred blows in three days.

Zaka was immediately conducted to our tent. They made him lie with his face to the ground,

two of his friends held the flap of his bernou, and the chaous administered the first two hundred blows.

The important trust this man had enjoyed near the Sultan's person, and his generosity, had gained him many friends. He owed his life on this occasion to their zeal and attachment. How could he have otherwise supported so cruel a punishment as eighteen hundred blows of a stick?

But the chaous charged with the execution struck sufficiently light. The Arabs who held the flaps of the bernou took care to draw it so forcibly that it presented a tolerable resistance, and weakened the force of the blows.

When the chaous had completed their task, they carried him into the tent. There his friends kneaded him, pulled his dislocated limbs, rubbed his whole body, and sought to revive him; and Ben-Faka, remembering only his ancient attachment, lavished every attention upon the unfortunate man, and had some coffee brought for him.

Zaka recovered by degrees; but was not freed from his irons; and, at my departure, he was still stretched on the earth, expecting daily, but in vain, a word from the Sultan to let them fall.

The Sultan's form of justice is very simple and very expeditious.

The two parties are introduced into his tent. The plaintiff states his case. They then proceed to examine the witnesses, if there are any. The defendant presents his defence. The Arabs in general are not able to explain themselves without a long harangue and a great deal of noise.

When this description of pleading is concluded, the Sultan decides alone, without appeal, the punishment which is to be inflicted on the criminal. He does not even pronounce a word, but certain signs are arranged between him and the chaous.

If Abd-el-Kader raises his hand, the accused is condemned to imprisonment.

If he raises his hand horizontally, the accused is taken beyond the boundary of the camp, and the chaous sever his head from his body.

If he inclines his hand to the earth the accused is dragged out, bound, thrown with his face to the earth, and beaten by the chaous.

The Sultan generally fixes the number of blows. If he does not, the chaous prolong or shorten the punishment according to their own pleasure.

The greatest part of the disputes and accusations arise from thefts, which are constantly occurring among these barbarians, and which generally meet with a great deal of forbearance. They shut their eyes to the greatest part of these offences.

I think I have already said that the chaous, besides the functions of executioners, also fill the duties of police and gens d'armes. They keep order in the camp, and watch over the numerous crowd which surrounds the Sultan's tent the whole day. But since Abd-el-Kader has given his cavalry trowsers and red vests, Mouftar has placed on each side of the tent a guard of twenty soldiers, who are relieved every three hours.

Since the Sultan's return, nothing was talked of but the great victory he had gained over the French.

I was very impatient to collect a few certain details of the result of the expedition.

A negro, named Hassen, a servant of Ben-Faka, on our arrival had the charge of attending to our tent. He had passed five months at Oran as a prisoner. At the conclusion of the peace they had sent him back to the Sultan. Hassen remembered the good treatment he had experienced at Oran, and therefore behaved towards us as a good and attentive servant. But the unfortunate fellow stole a bernou: he was discovered and degraded. He was driven from our tent, and placed in the ranks of Abd-el-Kader's thirty negroes.

His new position was not to his taste, and as often as he was able to escape, he came to our tent to talk and tell us the news. Often, in the middle of the night, when it was cold or rainy, I saw Hassen enter stealthily, and lie down by our side. He had followed Abd-el-Kader on his expedition, and I was anxious to question him on the events which were the general subject of conversation.

"Did you fire many shots? How many Frenchmen did you kill?"

"I did not fire a single shot. I remained the whole time near Abd-el-Kader, who stopped as usual at the distance of quarter of a league from the combatants.

"The first day we were at the village of El-Borgj. The Arabs were forced to leave it and gain the plain of Mascara. The second day we saw the French army encamped on the banks of the Abra. The following days we watched its motions, and

accompanied it during its march. It advanced across the plain, and we were on the mountains which border it. The Douairs and the Ismaelas alone have exchanged a few shots with the Arabs, without either party suffering any loss. The French fired a few cannon shot at us without effect.

“ General Letang, after having emptied the silos of the Garabas, renewed the garrison at Mousthaganem, revictualled the town, accomplished the same at Arzew in passing, and had returned to Oran, without having been seriously disturbed during the whole expedition.”

Such was, in a summary, the account Hassen gave me of this glorious campaign, of which Abd-el-Kader boasted so much the glorious results. Such was the importance of the success that the Arabs celebrated with so much joy, noise, and pride.

Such are the expedients of Abd-el-Kader for keeping alive the zeal of his partizans, for stirring up the tribes fatigued with the war, for exciting the fanaticism and devotion of this credulous and superstitious people. When I call to mind his paltry resources, his undisciplined and tattered bands, the unstable supports upon which he founds his rule, his misunderstanding with a great number of tribes, I cannot comprehend how he hopes to keep the field long. Abd-el-Kader finds himself at this moment between the French, who are preparing formidable expeditions against him, and the tribes whose tents he pillages, whose horses, wives, children, goods, herds, he carries off. The tribes

have begun to send forth a cry of grief and complaint at the sight of the complete destruction of their families and property.

I had passed the whole day with Meurice, in one of the gardens which surround the camp, playing at chess ; we returned at sunset to our tent, when Ben-Faka told me Abd-el-Kader wished to see me.

I hastened to the Sultan, who said to me with kindness, " Here are two letters."

The one was addressed to me by General Rapatel; the other was for Meurice.

I opened the General's letter, and told Abd-el-Kader what it contained.

" In compliance with the orders of the Governor of the French possessions in Africa, General Baron Rapatel will give ten Arab prisoners, whom Abd-el-Kader may point out, in exchange for the six prisoners, French and Italian. I have written," added the General, " to send the ten prisoners, and ten others, whom I offer in payment of the ransom of Mohammed Ben-Ousseind, the old Bey of Médéah.

" You may request Abd-el-Kader to send to a French town the prisoners of whose ransom we are treating. I give him the assurance that, as soon as the Arab prisoners are returned from France, I will have them conducted wherever he may desire."

This last phrase made Abd-el-Kader smile, and he immediately said to me,

" You shall set out when my prisoners are here."

The Bey of Médéah was our ally. The Bey

of Miliana, according to information I have collected from the Arabs, fell unexpectedly upon Médéah, pillaged the town, obtained possession of fifty muskets given by the French to Mohammed Ben-Ousseind, and led the latter away prisoner.

This unfortunate man was thrown, loaded with chains, into the prisons of Ouchda, a town situated upon the frontiers of the empire of Morocco, upon which it depends. He groans there yet, exposed to the most horrible treatment, and liable every day, from the cruel disposition of his jailers, to die of hunger.

It is another fact in support of the good faith and neutrality the Emperor of Morocco has sworn to maintain towards us. The Bey of Médéah, Mohammed Ben-Ousseind, Abd-el-Kader's prisoner, has been sent captive, because he was our ally, to Ouchda, a town of which the Emperor of Morocco is sovereign !

I return to the letter of General Rapatel.

Abd-el-Kader added, that he must have the twenty prisoners.

I observed to him he asked too many.

He consulted the marabouts who surrounded him, and said,

“ Write to your sultan that you shall not depart before he has sent me twenty Arabs.”

“ But you are not reasonable. Listen. The General grants ten prisoners ; ask him fifteen ; you will give up five prisoners, he will add five, and the difference will be equally divided.”

The expedient seemed to please the Sultan.

“ I must have fifteen. As for the Bey of Médéah, write that I will release him if they give me all the prisoners who are at Marseilles. But let us occupy ourselves at present about your exchange. We will arrange this affair afterwards.”

I wrote to the General and my family. As I sealed the letters, Abd-el-Kader resumed,

“ Have you said all you intended to say ?”

“ Yes.”

“ You have done well. You may write all you desire about what you see, or what you hear around you, respecting the manner I treat my prisoners. Restrain neither your tongue nor your pen, through dread of raising my anger. A Sultan as great, as holy as I am, fears no one in this world.”

I hastened to carry Meurice the letter from his wife ; I informed him of the favourable disposition of Abd-el-Kader. The letter of his wife, and the certainty of his approaching deliverance, afforded great consolation to the unfortunate man, and cast a soothing balm over the cruel wounds which rent his heart.

He pressed my hand, and fell asleep smiling. As for me, I entertained, for a moment, the hope of seeing his strength and health return ; for a moment I thought that I should one day hear him in his own country, relating the history of his captivity and his sufferings. I approached him to warm his limbs, benumbed with cold. I fell asleep happy and contented. But our sorrows had not yet reached their termination—new torments awaited us the following day.

From this moment, I have only a mournful and lamentable adventure to relate. No more pleasures, feasts, and good treatment; but have to speak of tears, groans, and soon, in the midst of these scenes of despair, depression of spirits, and unheard-of tortures, the sad and pitiless death, which will soon come to diminish our number. I feel the necessity of collecting myself, of calming the emotion that these recollections have excited in my breast, before commencing the recital of a drama, of which the *dénoûement* is so heart-rending.

CHAPTER XIV.

MEURICE FALLS SICK.—COLD.—THE ARABS MAKE CARTRIDGES.—
ABD-EL-KADER SPREADS THE NEWS OF THE DEATH OF THE KING
OF THE FRENCH.—REJOICING.—WAR IN MINIATURE.—DESCRIPTION
OF THE MANŒUVRES.—ARRIVAL OF TWO SOLDIERS MADE PRI-
SONERS AT TLEMSEN.—FALSE INTELLIGENCE.—RECITAL.—ARRIVAL
OF MONS. LANTERNIER.—MISERY.—SUFFERINGS.—CRUEL TREAT-
MENT.—HE IS SENT TO MASCARA.—DESPAIR.—MEURICE'S SUFFER-
INGS.—KINDNESS OF ABD-EL-KADER.

THE night was very cold; we could not keep ourselves warm. In the morning, when Meurice wished to rise, his limbs were frozen. He was obliged to remain stretched on the earth, or drag himself along like a cripple. His blood had flown to his head, which caused him dreadful pain. About eleven o'clock, I carried him into the sun, hoping that a little warmth would ease his pain.

A few days previously, they had pitched a small tent at two paces from ours. For six days, from morning until mid-day, a soldier from each tent came there to make cartridges. The Arabs first turn the paper round a stick, and introduce the ball into this case. When they have made a certain number of them, they bring the powder upon sheep-skin, and a party of the soldiers fill the cases by means of a small reed measure; others fold the cartridges. They form packets of fifteen, which they roll up in a sheet of paper, the size of

which is about equal to the length of the cartridge, and tie the whole up with a string. They must have made in the six mornings, thirty thousand cartridges. The soldiers were overlooked by Arabs who did not understand anything of this manufacture. They thus took no pains or precautions; and, moreover, in order to steal some of the powder, they often placed three or four measures in one cartridge. I have found many in the same packet an inch and a half longer than the rest. The Arabs open them afterwards, and thus obtain powder, which they dispense so uselessly, and to so little purpose, as soon as they have their guns in their hands.

On the 28th of October, Abd-el-Kader received from Morocco a letter, which announced to him the death of the King of France. I believe the Emperor of Morocco spoke of Charles X. Abd-el-Kader thought he meant Louis-Philippe.

He immediately spread the report in his camp, that the King of the French had been assassinated; that a civil war was on the point of breaking out in France, and that the troops cantoned in Algiers were about to be recalled.

This intelligence excited a great enthusiasm, a lively and uproarious rejoicing. The troops prepared to celebrate, worthily, the retreat of the French army; and for three whole days there was nothing but fêtes and rejoicings, both at Mascara and in the camp. Every morning, the cannons of the city conveyed to the surrounding country the signal for the amusements which were about to

take place, and of which the presence of the Sultan heightened the splendour. Men, women, and children hastened to the camp, from all sides, and assisted at the mock engagements which the troops represented for three consecutive days.

Every time the horsemen marched out to execute these manœuvres, the chief secretary of the Sultan sought for me, and conducted me out of the camp, and there for three or four hours we watched the racing and the mock combats of the Arabs.

Abd-el-Kader divided his cavalry into two separate troops. The first body without bernous or haicks, with red waistcoats and trowsers, represented the French. Abd-el-Kader placed himself in their ranks.

The second body, with waistcoats and trowsers, haicks and bernous, were the Arabs.

The two troops proceeded to post themselves *vis-à-vis*, at a considerable distance from each other. Abd-el-Kader sent ten French horsemen to skirmish. The Arabs sent as many from their side.

The assailants from the two parties set off, at first in a walk; then, as they advanced, increased their horses' pace. Arrived at twenty-five paces' distance from each other, they shouted their war cry, Ah! ah! ah!—shook their haicks and bernous, took aim at their adversaries, fired three shots, drew their sabres, and imitated a sword fight.

Then ten fresh horsemen detached themselves, at the same moment, from the two bodies of troops, and threw themselves into the midst of the fight.

The two first parties returned to their respective sides, whilst the new comers renewed the fight.

Sometimes even forty horsemen fought together, until the presence of fresh auxiliaries balanced the chances of success. The weakest retired at full gallop, uttering loud shouts, brandishing their sabres, and firing their guns.

At other times, a few horsemen left the field of battle, galloped far off on the plain, imitated a pursuit, and when they had galloped enough, returned each to his respective party.

The moment arrived in which the greatest confusion reigned in each camp. The *mêlée* was numerous and close, banners fluttered, sabres glittered, a cloud of smoke from the powder concealed from the view of the spectators the combatants, whose ferocious and warlike exclamations were still audible. Suddenly, the drums on both sides beat the recall. The chiefs restored order; the horsemen allowed their horses a few minutes' rest; the attacks, the races, the combats, and the evolutions then commenced afresh.

This military parade always terminated in the defeat of the French. Abd-el-Kader, when he thought it time to conclude the exercises, threw himself into the midst of the *mêlée*. Two Arabs seized the bridle of his horse, and led the Sultan prisoner to his tent, amidst shouts of joy and enthusiasm. Abd-el-Kader made his horse prance, assumed the attitude of a conqueror, and casting a haughty glance upon his Arabs, who were charmed with his grace and warlike appearance,

drew the reins. The horse reared up, and advanced on his hind legs.

Every time Abd-el-Kader passed near me, he had the vanity to make his horse prance and rear up. This magnificent animal neighed, tore up the earth with his hoofs, moved with grace and vigour under the skilful hand of his master, whose smile seemed to say to me—

“Am I not a superb horseman?”

And I to reply in myself—

“You would not be so bold, my handsome Sultan, if you were on an English saddle; you would soon measure the earth.”

On the last day, the infantry mingled with the cavalry: finding themselves uncomfortable among the horses, they hastened, divided in two parties, to conceal themselves behind the bushes, after having fired numerous shots. However, they rejoined the horsemen when Abd-el-Kader was made prisoner, and returned to the camp, filling the air with shouts of triumph.

These military parades were now ended, and I gained my tent in deep thought. I was far from giving any credit to the report spread by Abd-el-Kader, in the camp and among the neighbouring tribes. I reflected on the spectacle of which I had been three days a witness. The voice of Ben-Faka aroused me from my reverie.

“There has been a battle at Tlemsen,” said he, “and the caliphat has put the French to flight. He has made a number of prisoners. He is expected every moment to bring them before the

Sultan. Thus you are likely to have a more numerous company."

"Since I have been here I have had the opportunity of becoming acquainted with all your tricks and all your falsehoods. You tell me of the defeat of the French, and the capture of Tlemsen by the caliphat. Ben-Faka, when we were encamped at Tékédemta, did you not announce to me one morning, with the greatest assurance, that Achmed Bey, of Constantine, had obtained possession of Bona? The cannon on the redoubt at Tékédemta, did it not sing with its hoarse and cracked voice, for a whole day, this memorable victory gained by one of the Sultan's allies? Now, does the Bey of Constantine or a French general command in the city of Bona? You will tell me you were deceived; it is the wisest answer you can make. Yesterday they deceived, you when they told you the king of the French had been assassinated. To-day they deceive you, when they write that Tlemsen has fallen into the hands of the caliphat."

"Son of a dog, the prisoners will soon arrive, then we shall see which of us has spoken the best."

I rejoined Meurice. He was no better, but, on the contrary, his state grew worse from day to day. I passed a part of the time in rubbing his aching limbs, in warming his legs and feet by placing them to my breast. To soothe the violence of his head-aches, and allay the irritation of the blood, which had retreated to that part, I wet my hands, and applied them while moist to his burning fore-

head. It was the only thing which at all relieved the acute pain.

I was thus engaged, when Ben-Faka re-entered the tent, and in a voice of triumph, "Come," said he, "the caliphat has sent the Christian prisoners he has made at Tlemsen." Without replying to Ben-Faka I left the tent, and perceived two miserable soldiers, almost naked, without shoes, in a state of indescribable misery, whom the chaous drove before them with blows, as a butcher urges his weary oxen towards the slaughter-house. The prisoners stopped before the Sultan's tent. While they went to inform Abd-el-Kader of their arrival, I attempted to approach one of them and question him, but the chaous soon drove me off. As I departed, I saw the two soldiers enter the tent of the Sultan. I was relating to Meurice what had occurred, when the two new prisoners, conducted by Ben-Faka, were led into our tent. Ben-Faka gave each of them a haick. I made them a sign to approach us, and asked them a few questions.

"Whence do you come?"

"From Tlemsen."

"What are your names? To what regiment do you belong?"

"I am called Bourgeois," replied the first, "an old soldier of the 11th; my companion, formerly of the 66th, is named Fleury. We both belong to the battalion at Tlemsen."

"There was a fight, then?"

"Not at all, lieutenant," (I had already informed them who we were.) "It occurred thus; the Be-

douins had been blockading the town for some time, provisions were no longer brought to the market, the garrison were then put on quarter of their rations. They say appetite comes in eating ; very probable ; but it comes much quicker when there is nothing in the stomach. One morning, Fleury and I had our teeth sharper set than usual, and said to one another, ‘ We must forage among these Bedouins.’ There were a great many fruit-trees around the town. One or two did not satisfy us ; we had gone out to enjoy ourselves, we made a good hit of it, and were about to return, when—not so—we were caught by the Bedouins. We have been taken in the snare like larks, and the robbers, not contented with making us prisoners, have applied the stick the whole way.

“ Abd-el-Kader, they say, has earnestly commanded them to take as many prisoners as they can, but not to kill them ; that is, without doubt, the reason of our still having our heads on our shoulders.

“ We have suffered much. We must hope, since we are even in Abd-el-Kader’s palace, that we shall be no longer so ill treated. However, lieutenant, if you write to the governor, do not forget to mention the names of Fleury and Bourgeois, for this new cantonment is not at all to our taste.”

I gave these two unfortunate men every assurance of attachment and interest, and on the evening of the very day of their arrival, after having consulted with Abd-el-Kader, I wrote to general Rapatel, informed him of their arrival, and re-

quested him to give in exchange for them six Arab prisoners.

My new companions in misfortune soon shared all the anxiety I felt on account of Meurice's health; they forgot their own sufferings and misery to join me in attending to our poor invalid. They rubbed his arms, his stomach, and placed by turns his frozen legs upon their knees. In order to dress my wounds, the Italians had made bandages with the patches from Meurice's shirt. Bourgeois washed these rags, damped them, and, after having twisted them to squeeze out the water, applied them moist to the forehead of our patient. These rags, miserable though they were, were nevertheless better than our wet hands, which quickly became dried by the feverish heat of the sick man.

The next day Ben-Faka, in a tone as proud and disdainful as that he had employed yesterday to announce to me the arrival of the prisoners from Tlemsen, said to me,

"Come, look-towards the town."

"Well."

"You hear shouts, you perceive the horsemen?"

"Well."

"Well! They are bringing a prisoner to the Sultan. Have I again deceived you this morning? Here he is."

A French prisoner, about fifty years of age, passed before us. A long beard, a thick moustache, of a colour approaching to red, fell untrimmed and dirty, upon his naked breast; a shirt in rags covered

his shoulders ; soldier's pantaloons all torn, with a grey hat broken on all sides, completed his costume, and the blood which escaped from the wounds upon his legs and naked feet left a mark upon the road. From the outskirts of Mascara the children had followed his heels, and formed around him a noisy and cruel escort. They never ceased tormenting the captive, either by striking him or throwing stones at him. Several wounds were visible on his head, from whence trickled black and clotted blood. When the unhappy man passed before me, I wished to approach him, for Meurice, who had been carried out of the tent, recognised M. Lanternier, but the chaous raised their sticks ; the prisoner proceeded, and was conducted before Abd-el-Kader, amidst the shouts of the multitude. At the sight of this unfortunate man, bruised and wounded, and of the blood which flowed from his numerous wounds, Abd-el-Kader was moved with pity.

He caused Ben-Faka to give him a haick and slippers.

Then, as he had sent for him from Droma to accompany us, he ordered him to be conducted to our tent. But the chaous who had escorted him exclaimed,

“ Send the dog to prison, for he refused to walk and obey your orders.”

“ Have you despised the will of Abd-el-Kader ? ”

“ No, I have not despised your authority. I had suffered much. I was very unhappy ; but when the chaous came to tear me from Droma,

where my wife and my children are prisoners, although I was separated from them, although my prison was distant from theirs, I fell into a violent fit of despair: I wished not to stir from the town where my wife and child are kept prisoners. I threw myself on the ground. They beat me. I entreated the chaous to leave me near them, but they ill-used me so much the more. Then I arose."

"You see I have obeyed; I am in your camp."

"To prison, at Mascara!"

"But am I not sufficiently punished?"

"Again to a prison."

"O! let me remain in the camp, I entreat you, Abd-el-Kader! I have been well beaten! Look, my feet are torn by the stones and brambles. The chaous have broken their sticks over my shoulders; the children of Mascara have laid open my forehead with stones. To prison, after so many sufferings! and my wife! and my daughter! Be good, be generous. A moment arrives when every thing should have a change. I entreat you—I can walk no farther; I am hungry, I am cold; there is not a spot on my body which is not covered with my blood! Do not send me to prison, I entreat you; spare me; I never suffered so much."

Abd-el-Kader was inexorable.

"Conduct the Christian to Mascara," said he to the chaous. "Put him to prison, but keep him separate from the Arabs, who might strike him."

"To prison!" exclaimed the unhappy man, but he could not finish the phrase: a blow of a stick stopped his complaint upon his lips. We saw him

repass our tent. They prevented our saying a word of consolation to him, or pressing his hand; only, when he was near us, he turned his head; he looked at us, tears rolled down his cheeks, a deep despair was painted in that look. He must have read in our eyes our regret, our compassion, our grief. But he had slackened his pace. The chaos struck him, the children filled the air with shouts of derision, they collected stones. The unfortunate man suddenly sunk his head, a flint inflicted a fresh wound upon it, the blood flowed fast, the victim tottered, but the executioners mercilessly drove him on before them.

I hastened to the tent to conceal the tears that the sight of these tortures drew from me. The other prisoners also re-entered the tent. We all wept.

Meurice did not improve; on the contrary, his state became every day more alarming; by our united efforts we could not succeed in warming him. Bourgeois and Fleury rubbed his limbs, at the same time that they applied to his forehead and temples the bandages soaked in cold water. As for me, I went to the tent of Ben Faka's coffee maker, and warmed the remains of the linen, and Meurice's slippers; I brought them back heated, and placed them on his legs and feet. We gave him barley-water to drink, but we had the greatest difficulty in obtaining it; for, in spite of Abd-el-Kader's orders, they did not wish us to approach the kitchen fire. Meurice drank it with repugnance, for it was not sweetened. He also expressed a desire to go to Mascara, to take a vapour bath,

which would, he said, quite restore him. I immediately requested Ben Faka to ask Abd-el-Kader's permission to come before him. Ben Faka, who, after all, was a well-disposed man, discharged my commission, and soon returned to announce to me that the Sultan consented to see me.

Abd-el-Kader smiled on perceiving me, made me a sign to be seated, and asked me how I was.

"I am not ill, but poor Meurice is very bad. We cannot succeed in restoring warmth. I am afraid his legs are frozen. He thinks a bath would do him good. Will you grant him permission to go to Mascara?"

"He shall go to-morrow."

"Allow me to accompany him?"

"You shall accompany him."

"You are good, and very generous; you are worthy to be a great Sultan. I thank you for Meurice and myself."

"I have another request to make."

"Speak."

"We make barley-water for Meurice, but it is not agreeable to the taste—it is not sweetened. A sick man is difficult to please. When we suffer, we feel a disgust for every thing. Will you allow me a little sugar?"

"Yes."

Abd-el-Kader made a sign. Ben-Faka gave me about half-a-pound of white sugar. I thanked the Sultan; flew with joy to carry it to my poor invalid, and to announce to him he should next day go to take a bath at Mascara.

CHAPTER XV.

WE GO TO MASCARA.—TOUSSIS, DOCTOR OF THE SULTAN'S TROOPS.—
VAPOUR BATH.—KINDNESS OF MARDULIN.—A BARBER CUPS
MEURICE.—MONS. LANTERNIER.—HORRIBLE SECLUSION.—COM-
PLAINTS, SUPPLICATIONS.—RETURN TO THE CAMP.—I FALL SICK.
—PRESENTS FOR THE EMPEROR OF MOROCCO.—THE YOUNG
LIONS, THE PANTHERS.—A TAME LIONESS.—THE LITTLE CABIN
BOY IN THE CAMP.—MEURICE DELIRIOUS.—ABD-EL-KADER RE-
FUSES MY ENTREATIES, AND OPPOSES MEURICE'S DEPARTURE FOR
ORAN.

ABD-EL-KADER had placed one of his baggage mules at our disposal. We seated Meurice upon it, and the negro Hassen, who followed us everywhere, mounted behind him, and held him in his arms, the invalid being too weak to support himself on horseback. I took the mule by the bridle, and we set off at a slow pace towards Mascara.

The Sultan had sent with us the doctor of his forces, named Toussis; he had studied medicine at Tunis, and for years had charge of the sick in the camp.

This doctor was not clever; and I obtained, on this occasion, a proof of his inexperience. Toussis conducted us to the baths at Mascara. The house in which they are arranged formerly belonged to Abd-el-Kader; but since the expedition of the French as far as Mascara, he has granted them to the city; preserving the right for himself and attendants to make use of them without paying.

I entered the heated room with Meurice and undressed him, for he was not able himself to make the least movement. I was preparing to undress myself, and take a bath, but the dirt and unpleasant odour of the place turned me from my resolution. Meurice, who hoped to recover his health, was not so difficult to please. I left him, and went to walk in the town. I asked the permission of the Kaït of Mascara to see M. Lanternier, but my request was refused. I experienced great disappointment when I heard the unsucccess of my demand. Hassen perceived my sadness, and asked me the cause. "The Kaït will not allow me to visit M. Lanternier." "Remain here," replied he, "I will run round the town, and inquire of the inhabitants where his prison is situated. If I succeed in discovering it, I will endeavour to bring you to him."

I promised Hassen to wait for him. He went away. I seated myself in the sun, in the corner of an open space before a mosque. I had amused myself about an hour in watching the passers by, when I remembered Meurice would be waiting for me, as he could not dress himself. I returned to the bath, where I found Meurice in the stove, in the greatest distress. The Arabs would not champoo him, and this refusal rendered the vapour bath useless. Fortunately, Jean Mardulin, one of the deserters I had met on my arrival at the camp of Abd-el-Kader, chanced to be in the bath. He had heard the complaints and groans of Meurice, had immediately hastened to his assistance, and

had champoosed him as well as he was able. The Arabs, whose duty it was to attend at the bath, had refused to champoo him also, although a deserter, for fear of defiling themselves by touching a Christian. We had the greatest difficulty in the world in making Meurice comprehend that every Christian in his situation would have met the same refusal.

I went out, overcome with the heat of the stove, leaving Mardulin to dress Meurice, and went in search of the doctor, Toussis, who was to bleed the patient. On reaching the open space, I entered a house that Hassen had pointed out as the hospital of the town, and of which Toussis has the charge. I entreated the doctor to follow me, and visit Meurice, who desired to be bled. Toussis brought with him a barber, who spoke Spanish very well. We explained to him the object of our visit; he took his washhand basin, his razor, a glass, some fire, and paper, and followed us to the bath.

Mardulin, after having dressed Meurice, had rolled round his body three carpets, which the Sultan had given us for that purpose.

The barber shaved the nape of the sick man's neck, made several jags with his razor, and placed under a glass a few pieces of lighted paper. The blood immediately flowed freely, and Meurice found himself a little relieved by the application of the cupping-glass. Toussis, during the operation, watched the motions of the barber with great attention, and seemed rather to study and take a lesson in practical surgery, than assist at an operation of which

he had entrusted the execution to one of his assistants; thinking it of so little importance as not to be worth his while applying his care and talents to it.

They warned us that we must leave the stove; for the hour of the women's bathing was near (the morning is set apart for the men, the afternoon for the women). Mardulin and I enveloped Meurice from head to foot in the carpets, and carried him to the hospital. We arranged every thing we had at our disposal, so that he might lie down and sleep until the hour fixed for our return to the camp. I was very hot in the bathing-house; the cold struck me on leaving it. When Meurice had closed his eyes, I returned to the open space, and laid myself on the ground, and among the Arabs who passed and stopped before me, I perceived Hassen, who made me a sign with a mysterious air to follow him. I rose and drew near to him.

"Come with me," said he, "I know M. Lanternier's prison."

We crossed the space, and stopped before a house, the door of which was open.

"He is here," said Hassen, withdrawing; "act with prudence, for the Kaït has refused you permission to see the prisoner. If they should discover you prowling around the prison, you will be beaten."

I have said that the outer door was open. The walls were from a foot and a half to two feet thick. A second door, an iron grating, closing the room in which the Arab prisoners were confined, gave

air and light to this narrow cell. Between these two doors, in an embrasure formed in the wall, I saw a man covered with rags, thin, pale, of a miserable appearance, crouched on the earth. The disorder and filth of his tattered garments, the dejection and insensibility expressed on all this person, revealed the dreadful misfortunes and unheard-of tortures he had endured. His eyes still retained a certain vivacity, and they shone in the midst of the obscurity like those of a wild beast enclosed in a cage.

I drew near, and recognised M. Lanternier. A mournful exclamation escaped my mouth; the prisoner turned his head.

“ Fear nothing; it is a friend who comes to visit you. I am a prisoner of Abd-el-Kader; I am a Frenchman; I am called France.”

“ Lieutenant?”

“ Yes, Monsieur.”

“ Oh! my good sir, I have often heard speak of you; I also know your sad condition.” The unfortunate man raised himself with difficulty, and resumed,

“ You wish to bring consolation to a poor unhappy being, deserted by all the world. I have heard of you a thousand and a thousand times. The sight of you alone does me more good than the sun, when it comes to warm this benumbed body upon the damp earth.”

“ Meurice has related to me how you fell into the hands of the Arabs. Where were you before coming here?”

“ At Droma. They would not put me in the same prison with my wife and child. One day some horsemen made me leave my prison, and were about to conduct me beyond the walls of Droma. I entreated them to let me remain near my wife and child; they struck me. Tears, supplications, nothing could move them. If you saw me when I passed through the Sultan’s camp (I made a sign in the affirmative), you must have perceived upon my body the marks of the cruel treatment to which I had been exposed during my journey. The Sultan had pity upon me; but the chaous changed his good disposition by false reports. They pretended I wished to escape; I was guilty of having wept—of having endeavoured, by my entreaties and tears, to remain near my wife and child. The Sultan ordered me to be confined in the prison of this city.

“ My prison is horrible. During the night, when the outer door is closed, I run the risk of being suffocated by the dreadful exhalations which come from the room of the other prisoners, from which I am only separated by this iron grating. The prison is only swept out every eight days; the filth becomes collected, and infects the air with pestilential miasmas. I am very cold, both night and day.

“ The only food they give me is, in the morning a barley-cake, and in the evening a handful of boiled barley. I should long ago have died of hunger, but for the assistance of that good Mardulin, whom I had known at Droma. This excellent man brings

me white bread every day, and fills my snuff-box with tobacco. This last attention pleases me the most, for I would at any time give a barley-cake for a little tobacco. God has sent him in the midst of my adversity to soothe my sufferings, and afford me some little consolation. Mardulin has deserted; but his humanity, his disinterested and generous conduct, renders him more worthy to return to the ranks of his regiment, than the most glorious action performed on the field of battle.

“Do you return to the camp? Do me the kindness to entreat Abd-el-Kader to allow some relief to a poor prisoner. I am old, I am ill; for pity’s sake, ask him to place me in his camp, and unite me with the other Christians.”

“I promise you to speak to the Sultan. I hope he will in some degree ameliorate your condition. I also am unfortunate; my title as prisoner is a pledge for the interest you inspire me with. Courage, Monsieur! I am going away, for the sentinel begins to be suspicious and uneasy at my presence. I will return to see you soon, and hope on that day to take you with me to sleep in our tent.”

I departed, my heart pierced with grief at the mournful spectacle of such great misery, and of that man, enclosed like a beast in a cold narrow cell; the long tale of his sufferings, interrupted by tears and groans, which had just resounded in my ears, the unnecessary and barbarous severity, which perhaps also awaited myself, excited in my breast lively anguish and painful emotion.

This moral suffering, together with the cold I

had felt on leaving the bathing-house, made me unwell: I could scarcely walk. Hassen, assisted by Mardulin, placed Meurice upon the mule, and we returned to the camp. On the way, I dragged myself along; I tottered at every step; and was obliged, several times, to seat myself on the ground.

The next morning, on awakening, I was as ill as Meurice; my legs were frozen; I suffered violent pain in my head, and could not hold myself up. Bourgeois lavished every attention upon us, and his attachment suggested a thousand remedies by which our sufferings were a little alleviated, without always, at the same time, improving our health.

I entreated Ben-Faka to tell the Sultan that I wished to speak to him. Bourgeois and Fleury assisted me in dragging myself to the tent of Abd-el-Kader.

“Meurice and I shall die of cold,” said I to him, “if you do not give us more clothing. Meurice can walk no longer; I am in quite as deplorable a condition.”

Ben-Faka replied, “Abd-el-Kader, give these two Christians a haick and a carpet.” On the 2d November, some Arabs brought from Mascara three of the frames which serve to sustain the haicks over the panniers of the mules, and used by the Moors to conceal their women from view when on a journey. We learnt that they were intended to convey the four females, Madame and Mademoiselle Lanternier, and the two Germans, who were at Droma, during their journey;

and whom Abd-el-Kader intended sending as a present to Mouley-Abd-el-Rachimn, Emperor of Morocco.

Besides these three frames, they had also made three boxes, which were to serve in transporting five wild beasts they were also sending to Morocco, together with some ostriches, and which, with the four women and some carpets, would complete the magnificent present of the Sultan.

During our stay at Téknéfil, some Arabs had brought to the camp two young lion cubs and two young panthers. The care of these animals was entrusted to a chaou, of the tribe of Atlas, the inhabitants of which district apply themselves exclusively to the chace and the trade in skins. The young lioness had not as yet any teeth. They placed them every evening in the midst of a herd of goats. An Arab laid a goat on the ground, and presented its teats to the cubs, which threw themselves upon their nurse, and sucked her voraciously. A quarter of mutton was thrown to the panthers, which they devoured with rage, but care was taken to cut it in two parts, otherwise they would have fought to obtain possession of the whole. The young lions were very quiet, and allowed themselves to be played with. The little panthers were irritable and wicked ; they bit and scratched the Arabs who attempted to caress them.

A year previously they had brought a young lioness to Mascara, and had built a hut for her in the out-skirts of the town. She ran about the streets of Mascara the whole day, at full liberty.

The children played with her, mounted upon her back, pulled her by the tail, attempted to turn her over, and wrestled with her. She allowed herself to be teased without roaring; and amused herself in playing with the children, and biting without ever hurting them. A few days ago she was brought to the camp, and the Arabs played with her as they would have played with a dog.

The chaous, who took care of the animals, often asked us if we had any like them in our country.

"In our country," replied Fleury, with all the assurance of a trooper, "there are lions, tigers, panthers, and many other beasts of this kind, which run over the country in troops. They are more numerous than sheep, and more docile than horses."

The Arabs stared with astonishment.

Ben-Faka, while they were fastening the five wild beasts and the three ostriches in their cages, watched over the slaves who were packing up a magnificent carpet, embroidered in silk and gold, that Abd-el-Kader had taken from a tribe in the neighbourhood of the Ouet-Mina, two bernous, one of red and the other of blue cloth, and some carpets of less value, carried off by the horsemen from Kaala, on the last encampment of the Sultan, under the walls of that town.

Four horses, four mules, two chests of silver, augmented and enriched Abd-el-Kader's present to the Emperor of Morocco.

They placed the boxes, the bales, and the cages upon mules. They fixed the frames, and I felt a

contraction of the heart when the convoy set out, and I saw the mules move away, carrying the frames, under which were concealed the four women, and who counter-balanced the cages in which the ferocious animals were roaring.

Abd-el-Kader went every evening to his wife's tent, and returned to the camp at day-break.

Since the robbery of Zaka, Ben-Faka and Ben-About slept alternately in the Sultan's tent. One morning, Abd-el-Kader brought the little Italian cabin boy, Benedicto, to the camp, who for several months had dwelt in the women's camp. This poor child had a beautiful face, and was very intelligent. The Arab females had treated him very well, but still they had left him without any other clothing than the shirt he wore at the time of his capture.

He amused himself with the Arab children. He had completely forgotten his mother, his country; and when we asked him where is your mother? He pointed to the women's camp. He already spoke Arabic better than Italian; and when we questioned him about religion, he replied he was a Mahometan.

He recited the prayer of the Arabs very well. The soldiers of the camp caressed him a good deal, and took him to their tents; there they made him recite the Mussulman prayer. If a fresh Arab came in, they said to him,

“Tell the little Christian to recite the prayer of the Arabs.”

And it often happened that the child was com-

pelled to repeat it fifteen or twenty times successively.

Notwithstanding the care which we bestowed upon our little companion in misfortune, he never ceased regretting the women and the children among whom he had lived so long; and he was constantly asking us to send him to his mother, whom he had left down yonder—and he pointed to the women's camp.

Meurice's health and mind grew from bad to worse. I learnt that the Sultan intended raising the camp on the 26th, and proceeding in the direction of Tlemcen. I sent to ask Abd-el-Kader permission to speak to him, and obtained it without difficulty.

"How do you do?" said the Sultan to me, with a smile.

"I am very ill, as you see. I cannot walk. They have been obliged to carry me here."

"What do you wish?"

"I should not be obliged to tell you what I wish. I have a pain in my head, my legs are frozen, I suffer from cold; I am in a piteous state. Why do you not grant some alleviation to my misery? But it is not of myself I wish to speak. Meurice's state is most alarming. The unfortunate man has half his body frozen. All his blood has flowed to his head. Every morning, when I awake, I find him suffering under an attack of violent delirium. He tells me he has travelled in the submarine regions of Greenland—that he has passed over railways on ice. But these details will not

interest you^r much. The only cause of his delirium is the cold to which he is exposed. We cannot succeed in warming him. I entreat, Abd-el-Kader, send Meurice to Oran. I promise you the General will send four prisoners as his ransom. On seeing Meurice arrive, all the French army will praise your confidence, goodness, and generosity. I entreat you, Abd-el-Kader, send Meurice to Oran."

"No! besides, if he is ill, it will be better for him to remain here; rest will re-establish his health."

"Rest will re-establish his health! What are you saying? Repose upon the damp and cold earth, with the wind and the rain, which penetrate our tent,—for an invalid, it is death. The joy of his return, the attention Meurice will be surrounded with at Oran, will infallibly cure the unhappy man. Let him depart."

"No!"

"You will not understand me? Meurice is half dead. If he remains here eight days longer, he will not be alive on the ninth. To-morrow he will not have sufficient strength to reach Oran. And then consider, not only the pity the unfortunate man ought to inspire you with; the glory and renown you would acquire among your enemies; but still more, the advantages you would derive from Meurice's departure. You are more interested than any one that he should not die. If he returns to Oran, whatever his fate may be, you will obtain four Arab prisoners; if he dies in your

camp, you lose these four prisoners. Abd-el-Kader, tell your chaous to take him to Oran."

"No."

"What! you are deaf to my entreaties? What! you—so great, so generous, so holy—you know not what pity is? They lied, then, when they exalted the virtues of Abd-el-Kader."

"No."

"They have lied: for generosity has never entered into your treatment; pity has never found a place in your heart. Your Arabs write, they are treated like sultans at Marseilles; they have good clothing, abundant food, warm beds, excellent covering. And when, my limbs frozen, my headburning, sustained in the arms of my companions in misfortune, I raise before you my cry of distress, when you see the frightful misery, the filthy rags which cover my body, you smile and say,—‘Ask, you shall have.’"

"I ask not bread, a haick; I ask the life of a prisoner, who moves upon the damp and frozen earth in frightful convulsions. I ask his life of you. Ask Ben-Faka, and he will tell you—the hour of his death approaches, and will soon strike."

"Grant his life, for pity's sake."

"You are good: But this poor child—this cabin boy; your wife, they say, has fondled and caressed him, but what have you done for him?"

"You have not thrown a haick, a rag of covering over the body of the poor little fellow. They brought him to you in a shirt, and for five months the child has had no other clothing."

“The horsemen are cold, the men half frozen, and the child is quite naked! Where is your generosity?”

“Listen. Misfortune excites the imagination. It is difficult to govern the tongue when we think ourselves in the right.

“I wish not to offend you. You know I have always recognised you as a great and generous Sultan. We remain in your hands. Do with us as you choose, but send away Meurice.”

Abd-el-Kader cast a glance at me, in which was expressed contempt and pity.

There was a moment's silence.

Then, with his usual smile—

“Meurice is sick; the journey would kill him. You shall not follow my camp. You shall set out for Mascara. You shall live in a house where you will be well treated, and they shall give you all you wish. You shall be well clad. Your stay in the city will restore your health. Your exchange will soon take place.

“Ben-Faka, take two haicks and a waistcoat. The waistcoat shall be for the child, the haicks for Meurice and France.

“Is the Christian content?”

“Go.”

CHAPTER XVI.

WE LEAVE THE SULTAN'S CAMP.—ARRIVAL AT MASCARA.—THE KAIT GIVES US A HOUSE.—THE INTERIOR OF THE HOUSE.—MEURICE IS WORSE.—THE BARBER CUPS ME.—MOURNFUL DISPUTE.—MEURICE'S DEATH.—BURIAL.—ATTACHMENT OF JEAN MAR-
DULIN.

I RETURNED to our tent, overwhelmed with grief. The Sultan had just given a cruel contradiction to the benevolent intentions we had been pleased to endow him with. Meurice had flattered himself for a moment with the hope of returning to Oran. I had left him tranquil, and almost joyful. The unfortunate man, as soon as he saw me, read my want of success in my countenance. I did not attempt to deceive him by false promises and pleasing illusions; for stern reality, with its train of privations and misery, was too near us, and I saw it rise before us with all its horrors.

“He would not allow it!” exclaimed Meurice.

“No.”

“The tiger!”

“However, if he will not permit us to depart for some days, Abd-el-Kader has, at any rate, given such orders, that we may at least hope for some alleviation.”

“You are strangely deceived as to the intentions

of this man, whose generosity you praise on every opportunity."

"You are naturally disposed to accuse him."

"Accuse my executioner!"

"I know only too well all he has made you suffer; but, at all events, he consents to our exchange."

"When we shall be dead! Yes, De France, if he really desired to restore us to liberty, he would begin by restoring us to health and life."

"Listen to me. You do not yet know the result of our conversation."

"I know it. He will not send us to Oran. We shall all die here, and that soon."

"For the future we shall not follow the camp. We shall live in Mascara."

"It is too late."

"We shall have a good house. We shall be well warmed and well fed, and protected against the brutality of the Arabs."

"It is too late."

"In the mean time, here are two haicks: one for you, the other for me, which assuredly will in some degree assist in protecting us from the cold."

"It is too late!"

At these words Meurice concealed his head under his haick, stretched himself on the ground, and remained plunged in mournful silence and complete dejection.

The whole of the 5th, they were engaged in the necessary preparations for the excursion of the following day. I thought it far preferable to install

ourselves at Mascara this day, rather than wait until the morrow, when, at a very early hour, the Arabs would strike their camp, to betake ourselves to our new residence in the cold and damp of the morning.

I had charged Ben-Faka to entreat Abd-el-Kader to grant us this favour. He returned to announce to us that the Sultan consented to our departure. I hastened to arouse Meurice from his despondency. The hope of finding a better fate at Mascara, the desire of change, was of advantage to him. They brought a mule, upon which we placed our invalid. I asked one for myself.

“Ben-Faka, I cannot walk.”

“You must walk.”

“But you see very well I cannot hold myself up.”

“You must walk.”

“Tell a muleteer to lend me a mule.”

“They have already given one.”

“Yes, for Meurice. But for me?”

“You must walk.”

Ben-Faka went away.

Furious at this refusal, I said to Meurice—“I will revenge myself.”

Our tent was not watched. I poured several jugs of water into the boxes which contained the cartridges. I have the pleasure of believing that after so copious a wetting the cartridges which were inside will never be of any great service to them.

I had scarcely accomplished my project of revenge, when Ben-Faka re-appeared, bringing with

him the Kaït of Mascara. This last had the charge of escorting us, and we immediately set out, together with Fleury, Bourgeois, and the little cabin boy, Benedicto.

We had scarcely passed the limits of the camp, than I was obliged to stop, I became so ill, and so completely fatigued. The Kaït cried to me to march on. I rose, I made a few steps, and sank again to the ground, for I was no longer able to keep my legs.

The Kaït had pity on me ; he ordered Bourgeois and Fleury to place me upon the mule, behind Meurice. This last still had sufficient strength to hold himself on the mule, and he entreated me to embrace him with my arms. I, for a moment, forgot my weakness and pain. I thought only of Meurice, and in seeing him retain some strength, and guide his mule without assistance, I could not but deplore the obstinacy of Abd-el-Kader, for it was evident to me that he was in a state to bear the journey to Oran ; and that, if he should sink a little later on, his blood would rest on the Sultan's head, who had been deaf to all my remonstrances, and my warmest supplications.

We ascended a very steep hill before arriving at Mascara. I could not keep my equilibrium. I fell from the mule, and reached the town, held, rather than supported, by Bourgeois and Fleury. The Kaït conducted us to the open space, to a house, near to that in which he administers justice, and announced to us, it was the house we were to dwell in. It consisted of a court, which we passed

through on entering, and from which, on the ground floor, opened two chambers and a small kitchen, the roof of which formed a terrace.

A staircase outside in the court led to a chamber on the first floor. We chose that apartment in preference to those on the ground floor, for we thought we should be better protected from the damp.

No furniture of any description decorated the interior of the room. Two small windows opened into the court, and admitted a little light. The door was half broken, and a man could easily enter, by bending himself, through a hole at the bottom. A board, about three feet broad, fixed in the wall, without legs or back, and resembling a bad camp bed, seemed intended for us to sleep upon.

The Kaït gave us the half of an old tent of camel hair, and two carpets, to wrap ourselves in. The soldiers had the tent, and Meurice and I the carpets. The day after our arrival, when Abd-el-Kader had raised the camp, several deserters, not wishing to follow him on his new excursion, came to Mascara, and lodged themselves in our house, to share the bread distributed to us in the morning, and the couscoussou brought us in the evening. At this time the Sultan's gunners were at Mascara, where they had been sent to take the cannons of the town, and transport them to Tékédemta, in order to reinforce the formidable artillery with which Abd-el-Kader had supplied the new redoubt.

Jean Mardulin was among these gunners. He heard we were at Mascara. This good and attached

soldier came to see us. He found us so ill, that he proposed staying with us and nursing us. We accepted his proposition with joy. Still he could not be of great service to us, nor procure for us the necessaries we stood so much in need of, in the pitiable state in which we found ourselves. We had neither fire nor clothing.

Mardulin had collected a small sum of money, and generously placed his little savings at our disposal. We did not make use of this money, for we suffered too much to desire more abundant nourishment than the Kaït furnished us with every day. I was satisfied with drinking some fresh water, in which I soaked a piece of white bread, that Mardulin brought me in the morning.

Meurice only desired a glass of milk every evening. We requested some from the Kaït. He replied he was not able to procure any for himself. At the same time, droves of cows, sheep, and goats, returned every day to Mascara, and we heard their lowing and bleating, both morning and evening, as they went to their pasturage or returned.

Twice only, during Meurice's last sufferings, the Kaït brought us a little milkin a glass. He assured us this beverage would be of no service, and sent us instead a dish of couscoussou highly spiced.

Meurice had asked to see Monsieur Lanternier. The Kaït replied the Sultan had forbidden him to allow that prisoner to have any communication with us. Mardulin carried some food to this unfortunate man, which we took from our portion,

and reserved for him, with the most scrupulous exactitude.

However, the attentions which Mardulin and the other prisoners lavished upon us, our stay in a house, where, if we were not protected from the cold, we were at least sheltered from the rain, produced no improvement in our health. Cold was the cause of our sickness, under which all of us would inevitably have sunk. We had suffered from cold in the tent we inhabited in the camp of the Sultan, and we suffered as much from it in the house, under the roof of which Abd-el-Kader said we should recover our health.

I had entirely lost the use of my legs ; I could no longer walk ; and every day I felt the pains in my head increase in violence. Ten times I entreated the Kaït to have me bled ; ten times the Kaït replied it was a useless operation, for I had too little blood. At length, after fresh entreaties, he sent to me the barber who had already operated upon Meurice.

The barber applied the cupping-glass to my head ; I lost a good deal of blood ; my head-aches completely disappeared, and I found myself much relieved. The next day I wished to be bled again ; for I had experienced so great relief since the application of the cupping-glass, that I wished to follow up, by analogous treatment, the complete cure of my head-aches. They lanced my arm twice without a single drop of blood flowing. As I was complaining that my blood was chilled to such a

degree as not to spurt out after two attempts at bleeding, Meurice, in the delirium which agitated his mind, obstinately contended that he saw the blood flowing.

A lively dispute arose on this point. It was a mournful spectacle : two dying men, stretched miserably side by side in the same carpet, using the little strength they had left in this strange debate ! Death was seated upon our lips ; delirium tortured our minds ; grief and disease had cast a dull and pale hue in our eyes ; we had lost the use of half our bodies ; the same misfortune, the same misery had befallen us both, and we were wrapped in the same carpet, which might, from day to day, serve as our funeral dress ; and still we wasted the last moments we had to pass in this world in violent discussion ! At the moment we ought to have embraced and bid each other an eternal adieu, we had forgotten our ills, our end, which was so rapidly approaching, our friendship, born in the bosom of misfortune, to engage in a quarrel ! The remembrance causes me bitter reflections. The approach of death ought to have calmed our irritation, and given place to a perfect serenity, to a calm resembling that of a corpse. And nevertheless, we laboured under a moral convulsion.

Our condition was too grievous and too critical ; I cut short the debate ; I agreed with Meurice, and there was no longer a subject for dispute.

On the 12th, in the morning, the weather was dreadful, the rain fell in torrents, and we suffered

as usual from cold and damp. We drew closer to each other, and mutually sought to warm ourselves.

Meurice stretched his hand towards me. I seized it.

“How do you find yourself?” said I to him.

“I am no better. I am cold.”

“Draw nearer. Take my haick.”

“All these precautions are useless.”

“How? You are still strong. Your robust constitution should still inspire you with hope.”

“I do not suffer so much as yesterday, but I feel I shall not live long. I have told you that all these endeavours to re-establish my health are too late. France, if I die, as I feel a mournful presentiment I shall, take care of my journal, which I have to this day concealed from the eyes of the Arabs; it is my only property; the sole inheritance your unhappy companion in misfortune can bequeath you in his last hour. You are young, you will not allow yourself to sink under adversity: you will return to Algiers, you will see my wife. Dear Clarissa! tell her how I loved her! tell her that her remembrance has never been effaced from my heart. My friend!”

On concluding these words, Meurice concealed his head under his haick. For half an hour he uttered neither a sigh nor a groan: he seemed to sleep. I stretched my hand towards him and seized his arm.

“How do you find yourself? Are you still cold?”

He did not answer.

I raised myself, and uncovered his head.

He was dead !

* * * *

I immediately called the other prisoners.

"My friends," said I to them, in a trembling voice, and my eyes suffused with tears, "Meurice did not hear me when I spoke to him just now, I fear he has ceased to breathe. See if I am not deceived."

They drew near the corpse, and after an attentive examination they all cried,

"He is dead !"

I sank back, and remained plunged in profound consternation. For four hours all the prisoners in the room remained silent and motionless. The dead body of Meurice was by my side. I wept long over the friend whom I had found in the midst of adversity.

My thoughts separated themselves by degrees from this picture of misery and death, which for three months had been constantly before my eyes, and I turned them to a better world, towards a Supreme Being, into whose bosom Meurice's spirit had already flown. I said to myself,

"Since it was the will of God to call to him a man tried by so many sufferings, it was he that judged his punishment should have an end, and a recompense. I weep not on account of the unfortunate man whose body is by my side, but from the recollection of his friendship, his attachment, and the sufferings he has endured. Now I am alone, pursuing my fatal existence among my enemies.

"My God ! I suffer the same pain which hastened

the death of my friend. My time will come soon. Grant me strength to support the trying hour with courage. You will console my aged father: hope has already visited him; he awaits me. If the child returns to his father no more, O my God, strengthen his mind to bear the cruel separation. May the son and daughter who still remain to him relieve the bitterness of old age by their love and attention."

I will not repeat all the reflections which crowded on my mind. At such a moment, silence and thought are holy things. We must know how to respect the pale and silent death which rests under the same carpet in which we are wrapped.

Night had arrived. We had acquired the sorrowful conviction that our companion had ceased to live; the motionless state of his body, and the livid paleness of his countenance, sufficiently indicated it to us. We summoned the Kaït, and informed him of the death of Meurice. The corpse showed him the justice of our complaints, and the necessity of admitting them, if he did not wish to reply, when the Sultan should demand an account of the prisoners committed to his charge, "I have them not; death has carried them off." He gave orders to light a fire. One day sooner Meurice might have been saved.

In the middle of the evening, Bourgeois and Mardulin undressed Meurice, and, after having rolled the body in a carpet, carried it to the other corner of the room. They gave me the dress of the deceased. The vermin which were attached to

the haick were so numerous and so thick, that, when placed against the wall, it stood upright, like a board. However, misery and suffering had destroyed, by degrees, all sensibility, both moral and physical. I took his clothing and wrapped myself in it, and became much warmer.

On the afternoon of the following day, Mardulin and Bourgeois, assisted by two Jews ordered by the Kaït, carried the dead body away.

I felt deep emotion on seeing them depart — all was finished.

A few paces from the boundaries of Mascara, on the road to the village El-Borgj, Mardulin and his three companions dug a grave. They sewed the corpse in a piece of a bad haick, and laid it in the ground. Such were the only funeral ceremonies.

During the night which followed his interment the weather was terrific. The rain never ceased falling in abundance, and the wind blew violently. Nevertheless, at sunrise, an Arab came to announce to the Kaït that the body of the Christian was half out of the earth. In spite of the severity of the weather, the Arabs had disinterred the dead body, and had stolen the piece of the haick in which Meurice had been sewed. It was not wild beasts who had dug up the inanimate remains of the Christian, for they found no teeth marks on his body; but the marks of the mattocks were visible, which the robbers had used to accomplish their purpose.

The Kaït pretended to be angry, and assured us

he would punish the robbers; but he never attempted to find them out.

Mardulin immediately ran, through a heavy rain and furious tempest, to the spot where he had buried Meurice on the preceding evening. He enlarged the grave and replaced the body of our unfortunate companion, who, after having endured during his life all the torments the Arabs had it in their power to inflict, was not even secure after death from the brutal and ferocious passions of these barbarians.

When Mardulin had finished his pious task, and had announced to me that he had replaced the corpse in its grave,

"Mardulin," said I to him, "you are a brave and worthy man. I thank you for what you have done; you will be recompensed for it sooner or later. I am very ill; I, also, shall soon die.

"You will bury me, too, will you not?"

"But I do not wish to be disinterred; do not put anything round my body. You will dig a grave sufficiently deep, and cover me with earth and stones. Do not spare the stones. I wish the Bedouins not to come to look for me, and that I may be left in peace.

"Do you hear me, my friend? I only ask that of you."

"Lieutenant, you will not die; then"——

"But if I should die?"

"I will obey you. But you will not die, on my word of honour; and you will see if Mardulin is not right!"

CHAPTER XVII.

MONSIEUR LANTERNIER IS UNITED TO THE OTHER CHRISTIAN PRISONERS.—TREATMENT PURSUED IN MY DISEASE.—A LETTER FROM GENERAL RAPATEL.—FLEURY GOES TO READ IT TO THE SULTAN.—FOUR NEW PRISONERS.—THIRTY BENI-AMERS.—TWO ARE HUNG.—TROWERS.—HISTORY OF THE FOUR PRISONERS.—MADAME LAURENT.—DEATH OF MADAME LAFORET.—MISERY OF THE CHRISTIANS.—JOURNEY TO MASCARA.—MARDULIN IMPORTS DRUGS, WHICH HE SELLS TO THE ARABS.—CONVERSATIONS.—PROJECTS FOR A FETE.—A POOR NEGRO.—HEADS OF FOURTEEN SPAHIS BEFORE OUR DOOR.—SUPPER.—WATCHING.—TALES.—RETURN OF THE ITALIAN FISHERMEN.—ACCOUNT OF THEIR LIFE AT TEKEDENTA.—DEATH OF ONE OF THEIR COMPANIONS.—THE LITTLE CABIN BOY.—DEPARTURE FROM MASCARA.

ABD-EL-KADER, on the intelligence of Meurice's death, gave positive orders that every thing we required should be given to us. The Kaït asked me what I wished.

I was so ill I had no desire for any thing. Mardulin persuaded me I ought to take some soup. I entreated the Kaït to send me three fowls, and to unite Monsieur Lanternier to the other Christians. As the Arabs wished to save my life, the Kaït sent the three fowls, and delivered Monsieur Lanternier from his prison.

It is difficult to paint his joy. He conversed with me long on his happiness and thankfulness, and after inquiring into my condition, said,

“After the service you have rendered me, my

good Sir, I do not wish you to die. In obtaining from the Kaït permission for me to join you, you have given me more than half a life. You shall not die. I practised medicine in my village of Adel-Ibrahim. I have often been consulted. I have always cured my sick; and although I have not gone through my course of degrees, I know sufficient to save you."

By rubbing my legs and feet with a piece of woollen cloth for several days, he succeeded, by tearing away the epidermis, in producing a slight colour; that was all he desired.

Mardulin and Bourgeois heated bricks and applied them burning to my legs. Once they even placed an iron nail, red hot, upon my feet. I saw my skin burning, but felt no pain. At last, thanks to the repeated rubbings, and the burning bricks, my blood revived; I began to recover a little; I moved my legs, but was not able to walk.

The Sultan, during this time, was encamped to the south of Oran, in a spot where several Marabouts and warm springs are situated; and where the remains of aqueducts for baths are still visible. On setting out from Mascara, he had sent Milloud-Ben-Harrach with his horsemen to Miliana, to collect the imposts from the Hadjoutis and the surrounding tribes. He intended going in person, in the month of September, among the Hadjoutis, but the revolt of the Beni-Flitas, and the check he received on giving them battle, had prevented his putting this project into execution. I learnt that the courier from Miliana had arrived, with letters

from Algiers, and had presented himself to the Kaït. Bourgeois and Mardulin carried me in their arms as far as the threshold of the Kaït's house. Nothing but a moment of so great interest could have determined me on having myself dragged thus across the open square of Mascara.

The Kaït had pity on my deplorable condition, and addressed to me several words full of kindness. He told me the courier had a letter from Algiers, which, without doubt, would lead to my deliverance. I asked to see the letter, and as soon as I recognised the seal of General Rapatel, I experienced a joy, a happiness, impossible for me to describe.

But I again fell into a lively anxiety when the Kaït told me he could not open the letter, that he must immediately send it to the Sultan, and that Fleury should accompany the courier to read it, since my weakness and sickness would not permit me to endure the fatigue of the journey.

At the moment the courier from Miliana was setting out, we saw four fresh prisoners arrive: a colonist, Monsieur Pic, his servant (a German, and an old huntsman), a soldier, and Madame Laurent, a camp follower.

Monsieur Pic's servant, who had been wounded by a ball, remained at Mascara. The Kaït sent the three companions in misfortune, with the courier and Fleury, before the Sultan.

I was much distressed at not being able to go myself to read the letter from the General to Abdel-Kader, for I feared that Fleury might not ex-

plain it well, and confuse our affairs. I recommended him above all things to request the Sultan to exchange the four new prisoners for the four Arab prisoners who were to have been given up to ransom Meurice.

On the 18th, thirty Beni-Amers, men, women, and children, arrived at Mascara, loaded with chains. These unfortunate men, fatigued with the disasters of the war, and the ruin and desolation it had brought upon them, were journeying to Oran to place themselves under the protection of the French. They had been stopped on the way, by the Arab troops who were going to pitch their camp to the south of that city, and brought back captives.

Abd-el-Kader, wishing to make an example, and in the hope of intimidating the weak and irresolute, condemned the principal chiefs of this band to be hung. They expired in horrible convulsions at the gates of Mascara; the remainder were thrown into prison.

Fleury and the prisoners returned to Mascara, with a soldier named Devienne, captured in the neighbourhood of Tlemsen. The Arabs who escorted them, at the moment of their entering the camp of Abd-el-Kader, had ordered the Christians to take off the haicks which the Bey of Miliana had distributed among them; for, as they said, they must present themselves before the Sultan in the Christian dress. The prisoners obeyed, but they never recovered their haicks; the Arabs had robbed them of them.

Abd-el-Kader, after having interrogated them,

and recompensed the Arabs who had brought them, gave two small pieces of coin to each, and told them to fear nothing; that they should suffer no bad treatment. Fleury read the letter. The Governor granted the fifteen Arab prisoners for the six we were in number when I wrote. Abd-el-Kader dismissed him with the promise of immediately sending us all to Algiers.

The chief who had escorted Fleury brought an order to the Kaït to dress us anew in red breeches and haicks. Only one piece of cloth was to be found in all the magazines of the Sultan. The Kaït gave it to me, granting me the favour of fashioning it into trowsers instead of breeches. Devienne, who had worked at Tlemsen with a tailor, set to work to cut out the breeches. The piece only made three pair. Bourgeois, who before entering into the army was a carpenter, undertook to sew my trowsers.

The Kaït, on retiring, announced to us that we should set out for Algiers as soon as the two Italians, Crescenso and Francesco, who were at Tékédemta, and whom he was about to send for, should have joined us at Mascara.

The little cabin boy had quitted us some time before. He had taken refuge with the Kaït's wife, and passed the day in playing with the children in the square. He sometimes came at meal hours to eat with us.

The positive assurance the Kaït had just given us of our approaching departure for Algiers, caused

a general joy. I, however, was still suffering severely, and not yet able to walk.

In the evening, when we were together in our room, I entreated the four new prisoners to relate how they had fallen into the power of the Arabs.

They had not been taken together. Monsieur Pic was engaged with his servant in loading sand in the neighbourhood of Boufarick for a building he had commenced in that city. Some Arabs ran towards them, crying in their language, "Go, go!" The two Christians thought the Arabs friendly disposed, and were warning them to fly from some threatened danger. The servant ran as fast as he could in the direction of the town; Monsieur Pic was preparing to follow; the Arabs perceiving they did not take the direction they wished, fired at them, and wounded the servant in the thigh. They obtained possession of the two fugitives, loosed the horse from the cart, made them mount, and conducted them to the Bey of Miliana, who at this time was with the Hadjoutis.

The soldier had been to a fête at a house near Boufarick. On his return he was tipsy, and was surprised by the Arabs, who led him to a tribe situated near the *Tomb of the Christian*, a funeral monument, which encloses the remains of a Queen of Spain.

Madame Laurent, in company with another camp follower, Madame Laforêt, was going to Mahelma to see her husband; they were stopped by some

Arab horsemen, and taken to the tribe of the *Tomb of the Christian*.

During two months' stay in this tribe, where the soldier was also, with whom they would never allow them to communicate, these two women were exposed to every species of barbarous treatment. Madame Laforêt soon sunk under her sufferings and her despair: Madame Laurent obtained possession of her tattered dress, which assisted in protecting her from the cold. Still she must at last have experienced the same fate as Madame Laforêt, if the chief of her tent had not allowed her some relief. His son was a prisoner at Algiers, and he was in hopes of exchanging him for his captive. The conditions of exchange were not accepted. Madame Laurent became worse; and her master sold her to an Arab of a neighbouring tribe. She remained two months in the tent of her new master, sick all the time, and in the deepest despair. The Arab, finding she could not work, decided on taking her to the Bey of Miliana. The soldier had fallen sick, he could not continue his work, and his master conducted him also to the Bey of Miliana.

M. Pic and his servant, Madame Laurent, and the soldier were taken to Abd-el-Kader. On the way they had to endure the abuse and the blows of the Arabs. On their arrival at Mascara, these prisoners were in a state of filth and misery impossible to describe. Madame Laurent's hair was very long and covered with vermin; Fleury cut it

close, and with the money the Sultan had given her she bought a comb.

The Kaït had her taken to his wives, according to Abd-el-Kader's orders, but we soon saw her return to our room in anger. The Arab females had insulted her, and the unfortunate woman was compelled to return to us, to escape the cruelty of these termagants.

In order to know the character of all the prisoners, and how we employed our time at Mascara, I will relate how we passed our long days of captivity in that town.

At day-break, Mardulin gave the signal to awake. He lighted the fire, and while Bourgeois was heating the bricks and my draught, he went for provisions. He always bought with what money he could save, eggs, dried figs, white bread, and snuff for Monsieur Lanternier. The Kaït's negro slave brought some bread for each prisoner; they re-warmed the couscoussou of the preceding evening in a tin pot, the only one we had at our disposal; and whilst my companions were breakfasting on this couscoussou, I eat an egg and some Barbary figs.

After breakfast, each in his turn cleaned the house.

When the weather was fine, we passed over the square, and seated ourselves in the sun on the terraces of the Casbah, a building partly destroyed by the French, at the time of their passage through this city.

Monsieur Pic's servant, not being yet recovered from his wound, remained alone in the apartment; the only thing he had to dress his wound with was, some honey and a little cerate, that Mardulin composed of oil and wax.

We laid ourselves down on the terrace, and gave chase to the vermin.

One day, when Bourgeois and Devienne were engaged sewing the trowsers, Mardulin seated himself near me, while the other prisoners were chatting together at a few paces from us—

“I hope, Lieutenant,” said Mardulin to me, “that when you shall have returned to Algiers, you will think of me. You will ask my pardon?”

“I promise you that, and I hope I shall easily obtain it. The care you have not ceased bestowing upon the prisoners, make you worthy of a better fate. I owe my life to you; I will use all my endeavours with the Governor that you may soon return.”

“If the Governor grants me permission to return, how will you inform me of it? for Abd-el-Kader is desirous of keeping me with him; and, if he had the least suspicion of my wish to return to Algiers, I should be closely watched.”

“As soon as I shall have spoken with the General, I will write you an unimportant letter: if you can return, I will place the General's seal at the head of the letter. If your pardon is not granted, which I think very improbable, the seal will be placed at the bottom of the letter. Mardulin, when you interred our poor friend Meurice, I said

your attachment would meet its recompence sooner or later. I feel the conviction that you will rejoin me at Algiers a few days after my arrival. Until then, continue to conduct yourself before the Arabs in the same manner as you have done. Be attentive, obliging; the least change in your actions might cause them to suspect, and you would be exposed to their restless vigilance."

"Lieutenant, I will follow your advice."

I only gave this advice to Mardulin because I knew Abd-el-Kader considered it of importance to keep him among the Arabs. Mardulin mixed medicines, he was a perfect Maître Jacques. On the morning on which we had thus conversed, several Arabs had come to consult him regarding violent pains they suffered in their legs and loins. He had sold them in vials, a douro each (about one hundred sous), my draught of the root of patience and dog-grass, prescribing them to drink it every two hours, in small spoonful. He also gave them small papers, containing some earth and pounded sulphur, to rub their aching limbs; each paper sold for a small coin.

Mardulin sold his powders and his elixirs to collect some money, which he employed in relieving our misery; whilst the other deserters only joined us to share the food they distributed to us each day. We had ceased speaking, when we were struck by the noise of the conversation of the other prisoners. They were conversing of their return to Algiers; they already fancied themselves free, even while still clothed in the garb of misery;

while lying stretched in the sunshine killing the vermin; while the first Arab that passed abused and struck us. My companions in misfortune thought only of their return to their country, and had forgotten their present miserable condition.

"I hope," said Monsieur Pic, "that when we pass through Boufarick, on our way to Algiers, you will do me the pleasure to stop a short time, and breakfast with me. Madame Pic will be much flattered by receiving you. The poor woman, how happy she will be to see me again! If the repast should be confused, you must not attribute it to indifference, but to the joy my wife will necessarily feel; for doubtless she thinks me dead, and my appearance will cause her some emotion. We will endeavour, however, to give you a good breakfast."

"Gentlemen," replied Monsieur Lanternier, "I must not be behindhand; you will do me the honour to dine with me in my village of Adel-Ibrahim. I am old, but to celebrate our deliverance, I will take care none shall drink or eat so much as I."

"Ah, ça!" continued Madame Laurent, "I hope, Messieurs, you will not affront me, by not permitting me to contribute my share. But first of all I wish to know, if we shall go from Boufarick to Algiers in a carriage?"

"Ah," replied the deserters, "we will have a car, upon which you shall mount, and make your triumphal entry into Algiers."

"Silence, Messieurs! I shall have the honour of receiving you at my establishment, and offering you a glass of wine. The first and every following

day, the celebrated and unfortunate captives of the Bedouins shall have the right of drinking, gratis, as is allowed on the fête of Louis XVIII. in the Champs Elysées. I shall have the honour of waiting upon you, and I entreat you to believe that my costume shall be more recherchée and better attended to than it is to-day, amiable and unfortunate captives of barbarians."

"Long life to Madame Laurent!" cried all the prisoners. "The amiable captives will all meet again at your house in Algiers."

"And in the evening," resumed Monsieur Lanternier, "a supper, with a musical accompaniment."

"I hope, Lieutenant," continued Madame Laurent, turning to me, "you will deign to honour us with your company at dinner."

"Certainly, Madame."

"Long life to Madame Laurent!"

The conversation on these subjects was interminable. I arose, and proceeded to walk up and down the square, leaning on Mardulin's arm. At the corner of the square we perceived a pastry-cook's shop, we entered it, and eat a few fritters cooked in butter and rubbed over with honey, which we saw them preparing. We then promenaded a short time.

After having shaken our haicks, and beaten them to rid ourselves of the vermin with which they were covered, we returned to our abode. On passing over the square, I saw the Kaït of the town break several sticks, which he hastily snatched from the hands of chaous, upon the shoulders of a

negro attached to the Sultan's service. When he was tired with striking, he ordered the chaous to administer one hundred blows in addition. The fault he had committed sprung from a noble and generous feeling. His mother was dying, and he desired to be present at her last moments; they had refused him the permission of receiving her last sigh. He had left the Sultan in spite of his prohibition.

The sufferer did not utter a complaint—a single cry, except when the chaous made him leave the town, a tear moistened his eyes; he had not embraced his mother—a passer by had just told him she was expiring.

I entered the house, and dined with Madame Laurent on a *pànado* Bourgeois had prepared for us. I had scarcely finished, when the report of cannon and musquetry fired in Mascara, accompanied by tumultuous shouts, were audible. We stood at the threshold of the house.

A hideous spectacle presented itself to our view. Before our dwelling they had placed the heads of fourteen Spahis soldiers, surprised and massacred in the neighbourhood of Algiers. The uproar which had drawn us to the street, was the effect of the intoxication of delight this horrible spectacle produced among the Arabs. The children kicked the heads about; some picked them up and cast them against the walls of our house. We entered the house deeply afflicted.

An hour afterwards they placed these heads in sacks, and carried them to the camp of the Sultan,

whose tent they were intended to adorn. This scene made me unwell. Mardulin and Bourgeois, after a long friction, rolled me up in my carpet. When the day began to close, Bourgeois carried into our chamber some fire from the kitchen on a tile. Some warmed themselves, some smoked, others played at cards or chess, with the games I had formed at Teknifil. The Kaït's slave, with his harsh voice, soon announced to us, that it was time to go for our couscoussou, and the oil to supply our lamp. This lamp was formed of earth, and resembled our candlesticks. In the hole in which we place the candle they pour the oil, and place a small holder, which supports the wick. The lamp was placed in an excavation purposely formed in the wall. The Doctor Toussis gave us the oil.

Each went in his turn to the house pointed out by the Kaït, the master of which had to provide our food, to receive the couscoussou. The inhabitants of the town were obliged to furnish us with provisions in turn. Before Abd-el-Kader quitted Mascara, his house sufficed for the necessities of his train and prisoners; since then the inhabitants have had the charge of supplying them.

When we had eaten our couscoussou (the quantity sent us was sufficiently large, since we breakfasted on the remains), we laid ourselves down, and entertained ourselves, until sleep visited us, by relating tales.

"Oh, Monsieur Lanternier, a tale!" cried the deserters.

Monsieur Lanternier immediately related, with spirit and facility, histories of robbers or ghosts. Most frequently Tom Thumb, the Sleeping Beauty in the Wood, amused our wakefulness. These tales excited the most lively curiosity, and the greatest attention. Madame Laurent also contributed her share. The soldier had a good voice, and sang the songs of Provence with great taste and skill.

Sleep at last fell upon us, and silence reigned around.

On the morning of the 24th, the Italian fishermen, Crescenso and Francesco, arrived from Tékédemta. These poor people expressed the most lively affection for me; there were only two of them left. Their comrade, Berthoumian, had died at Tékédemta; they also found me alone—Meurice was no more. They were good and brave sailors; they loved me; we had long supported together the same misfortunes. They seated themselves by my side, and Francesco related to me what had happened to them since our separation.

“You know, Lieutenant, what sorrow we felt when Ben-Faka separated us from you at the moment you was coming to speak to us; we were still ignorant of the fate which awaited us. What was our consternation when we took the road to Tékédemta! We thought M. Meurice and you were about to be sent to Algiers, and we were to be condemned to a perpetual captivity. On our arrival at Tékédemta, the Arabs employed us in carrying the earth and stones necessary for the construction of the Casbah; we suffered every pos-

sible evil. Imagine, Lieutenant, that they set us to work at day-break, that they forced us to labour until night had fully set in, without allowing us a moment's repose, while the other workmen did not go to work until after sunrise, retired to rest on its setting, and never went out when the weather was bad.

"The only food we had was a small barley biscuit in the morning, and a handful of boiled barley in the evening. You know what they are capable of making a poor Christian undergo, and it is useless for me to repeat all the ill treatment we endured.

"I will mention one case, by which you will see how we were treated by the Sultan's orders. One evening that we quitted our work rather later than usual, they sent us to draw water in the Ouet-Mina; as we were bathing, we were assailed by the Arabs, who drove us back to our tent, with heavy blows of the stick.

"In the first moment of our surprise, we forgot, while flying from the blows, the two leathern bottles we had taken and filled with water; this forgetfulness caused us a cruel punishment; they not only put us in irons for three days and three nights, but they also increased our sufferings by their manner of putting them on. Crescenso and I were fastened to the same bar, each having a foot enclosed in one of the rings, so that neither of us could make the least movement, without mutually hurting each other. They compelled us to work for three days thus chained together.

“The cold became very severe in the mountains, our feet were naked, and this miserable haick our only covering. They made us sleep in the open air. We lighted a fire during the night, but this precaution did not prevent our suffering dreadfully from cold; our companion, Berthoumian, felt ill; he could no longer hold himself on his legs, and talked wildly. The Arabs, seeing him in so miserable a condition, permitted him to sleep in a tent.

“At last, one night, during which it froze, and the snow fell thickly, Crescenso and I were seated round the fire. Oh! Lieutenant, I shall never forget it; it was cold enough to crack stones. The Arabs called to us, and ordered us to carry Berthoumian into the open air, for the unfortunate man already began to rattle, and they did not wish him to heave his last sigh in their tent.

“We took our poor companion in our arms; we had anger in our hearts, and tears in our eyes; we stretched him near the fire, and seated ourselves by his side. The snow continued to fall thickly; we brushed it off as it fell; but it was so cold! Poor Berthoumian soon died—he was frozen—we remained by the side of the corpse. Half an hour had scarcely elapsed since he had breathed his last sigh, when we could no longer recognise his features, the snow alone, which was heaped up on his body, marked the outline of it. God alone knows what we that night suffered.

“At day-break, the Arabs, on learning his death, would not, at first, permit us to inter him; at last

they yielded to our prayers. We stripped the dead body, and lowered it into the grave we had dug for it; and we had at least the consolation of seeing that a Christian was the first to be buried in Tékédemta.

“The death of Berthoumian gave us a haick and a shirt; we covered ourselves with them. I know not if we were wrong in clothing ourselves in the dress of the dead, and if God will punish us for it;—but, Lieutenant, our legs and feet were naked; we slept in the open air; this haick and shirt protected us a little from the cold. We suffered so much!

“We heard nothing said of Monsieur Meurice or you. The Arabs, far from allowing us to hope a speedy termination of our captivity, attempted, on the contrary, to persuade us that it was never to end. Thus we had, in perspective, nothing but the labour and cruelty to which we had been constantly exposed, and the terrible death to which one of our number had already yielded. They told us you had been exchanged; we lost all hope of ever being ransomed.

“We conceived the project of escaping; two Turks, made prisoners at Mousthaganem, who were subjected to the same labour as ourselves, had formed a similar design; we joined together to assure success. Our food was far from being abundant; still we placed on one side every day a few pieces of biscuit, which were to suffice to satisfy our hunger during our flight. We were on the point of starting, when the horsemen of Mascara came for us.

"They told us we were about to be conducted to Oran. Nothing can give an idea of our joy at this intelligence. I thought for a moment I should become mad.

"They at last brought us two mules; we set out. We have travelled two days and two nights without stopping, and were so happy, we never thought of eating the whole way. The Arabs offered us some barley, but we refused it. Happiness prevented our being sensible to hunger.

"Our misery had nearly finished. Why are not M. Meurice and poor Berthoumian with us! In truth, Lieutenant, we shall again see Genoa?"

"Certainly! but in the mean time you must eat."

Mardulin ran to buy some bread and dried figs. Whilst the two fishermen were devouring the provisions which Mardulin had just given them, they desired to see the little cabin boy.

I sent for the child. The fishermen in vain covered him with caresses—he no longer recognised them.

"Benedicto," said they to him, "you have forgotten us?"

"No."

"What are our names?"

"I do not know."

"Where is your country?"

"Here."

"You have not been baptised?"

"I am Mussulman."

"Not so, little fellow! you are a Christian. Be-

nedicto, have you then forgotten the vessel in which we were embarked when we were fishing for coral?"

The child did not reply.

"Do you not wish to return to Algiers?"

"No."

"But we shall go to Genoa; you will see your uncle, who is the owner of beautiful vessels; you will embrace your mother."

At this word the child seemed to feel some emotion, and his recollections appeared to return.

"You will come with us to see your mother?"

"Yes, but I should not like to leave the children of the Kaït and my mother who is down yonder."

And the child, on pronouncing these words, pointed with his hand to the spot where the tent of Abd-el-Kader's wife was situated. He then hurried away to play in the square with the children of the town.

The next day, the Kaït of Mascara summoned us all to him. He announced to us we should soon depart for Algiers, and that he had received orders from Abd-el-Kader to clothe us all.

Bourgeois, Fleury, and I had trowsers. They distributed to us haicks and slippers. Three did not receive haicks. They gave us woollen waistcoats. Our slippers were worn out; I went to the Kaït to ask for others.

"You have no need of them," replied he to me. "You will not walk; you will be on a mule."

"That is no reason for allowing me to set out barefooted."

“Son of a dog, silence !”

“No ; I will not be silent. Before my departure I will tell you what I think.

“You are right to call me son of a dog ; for you have treated me like a dog. You have killed Meurice and the fisherman ; you have driven me to the verge of the grave.

“You have left us naked, exposed to the most severe cold. You have fed us like swine. And your countrymen, prisoners at Marseilles, are treated with kindness. They have written they were well off, and still you have granted no alleviation to our suffering.

“The Sultan clothes us because we are about to return to our own country. He wishes the French, on seeing us dressed, may think he is good and generous. They know all his deceit.

“I will relate to them all the bad treatment we have experienced. Tell Abd-el-Kader I am sorry to set out without seeing him ; for I should have wished to repeat to him, before returning home, that his conduct towards his Christian prisoners is infamous !”

I retired, transported with rage. The Kaït returned a few moments after, and gave me two *piecette*. Formerly, each *piecetta* was worth eight *mousounés* (eight sous) ; at present, they are each worth eleven *mousounés*. Since the poverty of this treasury, Abd-el-Kader has increased the nominal value of the coin about a quarter. At last, on the morning of the 30th, they led before our door some mules laden with skins, which the

merchants of Blida and Miliana were taking to this last town, where they were to be prepared. The Sultan had ordered all the Christians to be sent to Miliana. Three deserters were comprised in our caravan. The Kaït requested us to prepare to set out immediately. I mounted my mule. In my joy, and in the hurry in which we set out, I forgot my cards and chessmen. I had taken pleasure in the idea of carrying them with me to Algiers, and preserving these objects which had relieved the long hours of captivity. The Kaït gave the signal of departure; Benedicto cried, he did not wish to follow us. The children called to him; he begged the Arabs to leave him behind; but Francesco took him in his arms, and placed him on his mule, in spite of his cries and tears.

The women, children, all the inhabitants of the town, overwhelmed us with abuse and threats. We passed unmoved through this vile and barbarous population. We were absorbed in the happiness of quitting this frightful country.

My joy was soon embittered by a feeling of sorrow and regret. The Kaït had had the cruelty to send Jean Mardulin to dig up a piece of cannon concealed in the ground by the Arabs at the time of the occupation of Mascara by the French, at a league from the city, and in quite a different direction from that we were taking.

We were grieved at leaving this place without squeezing the hand of this excellent man, who had been our benefactor during our whole stay at Mascara.

CHAPTER XVIII.

JOURNEY FROM MASCARA TO MILIANA.—TEARS SHED IN MEMORY OF MEURICE.—THE VILLAGE OF EL-BORGJ.—HALT FOR THE NIGHT.—PRETTY VILLAGE.—THE HOUSE OF THE KAIT.—OUR LODGING.—TRIBES OF THE OUNET-MINA.—WEALTH.—THREE ARAB WOMEN.—THEY MAKE BREAD CAKES.—WE PASS THE NIGHT IN A DOUAR.—FORCED MARCH.—SUFFERINGS.—WE ASCEND THE CHELIFF.—REMAINS OF A SPANISH TOWN.—MEETING WITH SOME HORSEMEN.—WE ARE WELL TREATED BY AN AGA OF THE PLAIN OF MILIANA.—PICTURE.—MARCH.—ARRIVAL AT THE CAMP OF THE BEY OF MILIANA.—THE GOOD COFFEE MAKER.—ARRIVAL AT MILIANA.—DESCRIPTION OF THAT TOWN.

WE had scarcely passed the last houses in Mascara, when we heard the Kait of the town order our escort to stop; he counted us three times successively, we were twelve Christian prisoners and three deserters. The mules on which we rode belonged to merchants, to whom the Sultan gave a certain sum, in payment for the expense of our transport. Four prisoners were on foot, but they were to mount in turn. The owner of the mule on which I rode assured me, that after leaving his skins at Blida, he would go to Algiers for merchandise. This information afforded me great pleasure; it gave me the hope of reaching Algiers sooner than I had anticipated. Several Jews and Arabs, on foot or on asses, who were also proceeding to the province of Algiers, had joined our caravan; we

were forty in number. A Kaït from the neighbourhood of Mascara accompanied us, and one of Abd-el-Kader's horsemen had the charge of watching over and protecting us. The Kaït of Mascara, after having counted and recounted us, recommended the chief of the escort to treat us well, and never to make me dismount from my mule. He left us, and we pursued our journey.

After a few moments' march, Bourgeois came to me and said,

"Lieutenant, here is the spot where we buried M. Meurice."

All the prisoners bowed their heads. I saw the two Italians wipe away the tears which rolled down their cheeks. I shed a few tears at the remembrance of my friend, and we all hastened away. I should have wished to have taken his body with us to Algiers, and buried him in a spot where the wild beasts and Arabs would not disinter him. A young marabout, who was going to Miliana, joined our caravan.

Towards one o'clock in the afternoon, we discovered the village of El-Borgj. At a few paces from this village we saw a numerous body of Arabs, from among whom rose a deafening noise. The Kaït told me it was market day; still the presence of so great a number of Arabs seemed to cause him some uneasiness; he dreaded for a short time lest the prisoners entrusted to his care should become the victims of their fury. He made our troop halt, and sent the horseman to warn the Kaït of our arrival. We made a circuit in order not to

pass through the village, and seated ourselves on the other side. They told us to wait and rest ourselves, until we received our ration of bread.

The village of El-Borgj is situated upon a low but steep hill, which borders the plain of Mascara on the north; it encloses a mosque, and two or three houses built of stones, the others of clay, and covered with straw and brambles. It is surrounded by a wall of four feet high, in which are two gates, one facing the east, the other the west. There are some fruit trees in the surrounding gardens, but more generally vines. The Arabs never cut them; they grow several feet above the ground, and extend their branches, loaded with delicious grapes, similar to trees. The grapes of the village El-Borgj are in great repute among the Arabs, and it is certainly well deserved.

We remained seated a quarter of an hour, waiting for our bread; during this time the women and children from the village ran towards us, and never ceased annoying us with abuse and threats. At last they distributed to each of us a bread cake, and we immediately resumed our march. The bread was white enough, but sour; the flour must have been old. Nevertheless, although they were quite warm, I devoured my half cake. In proportion as I removed from Mascara I felt my strength and appetite return.

We travelled all the day along frightful roads, and over ravines and hills, stones and brambles, in a wild and uncultivated country. At the approach of night we reached a little village, situated four

leagues from the cascade of the Ouet-Mina, in the south-west.

The position of the village is delightful; the houses are built in the form of an amphitheatre, at the foot of the mountain. The house of the Kaït is a little lower; it is of a tolerable size, of a very pretty appearance, and built on a small island formed by two rivulets; it is surrounded by a garden, filled with fruit trees, laurel roses, magnificent poplars, fig, almond, peach, apricot trees, vines, jujub trees, which cover all this portion of plain and mountain, and give this spot the appearance of a rich and fertile country. The gardens of the inhabitants of the village are abundantly supplied with fruit trees of every description, and spread gracefully on the sides of the ravines, at the foot of which the streams which water them constantly maintain a luxuriant and flourishing vegetation.

While our Kaït was conversing with the Kaït of the village on the arrangements he had to make for lodging the Christians during the night, the merchants who accompanied us were pitching their tent. We entered the village by a very steep footpath. They conducted us to the house assigned us by the Kaït; but, on seeing us, the owner became violently angry, and repulsed us with fury. After half an hour's discussion with the chief of our escort, he succeeded in having us conducted to another house.

On entering the room which was destined for us, we at once saw that it was usually inhabited by a race different from our own: it was a stable. The

house was built of stone ; the walls were only three feet high, but as the roof was sloping, we were able to stand upright. They lighted a small fire in the middle of the apartment, after we had brushed it out. They spread a carpet in one of the corners for our chiefs. We seated ourselves on the ground. The young marabout recited the prayer ; they then served us a dish of excellent couscoussou. We made a good meal, but passed a very bad night. A thick smoke filled the room. We took care not to extinguish the fire, as we should have suffered so much from cold, and preferred not sleeping to having our legs frozen.

As soon as day appeared, we continued our journey. The prisoners who had walked the day before mounted the mules. After four hours' march, we arrived at another tribe on the banks of the Ouet-Mina.

The Kaït who commanded us, after having ordered the rest of the caravan to proceed and wait for us on the banks of the river, made a sign to me and the Italians to accompany him. Having passed through the tribe, we entered a tent of camel-hair, large, and of a rich and comfortable appearance. The men of the tribe were at the market on the banks of the Ouet-Mina. We only found three women in the tent, whose rich and neat dresses confirmed us in our opinion, which we entertained before entering, that it belonged to a wealthy chief. One of the women was young and pretty. We seated ourselves on the carpet. The women and children of the other tents immediately

ran to look at us, and never ceased, by their manner, grimaces, and words, expressing their hatred of Christians. The Kaït demanded bread for his followers and prisoners.

The three women immediately began to make cakes. One of them took a mill, and busied herself in grinding the corn; the second lighted the fire, and diluted in water the flour which the first gave to her; the third placed a pan on the fire, in which she melted some butter, and cooked the cakes, after having kneaded the flour.

Our chief put a sufficient number of cakes into a sack, and we rejoined the remainder of the caravan on the banks of the Ouet-Mina. They distributed the rations of bread, and we continued our journey. I saw again with pleasure the spot on the banks of the river where I had occasionally bathed with Meurice. We had passed there the least unhappy days of our captivity. After having crossed the river, we marched towards the north, to avoid the tribes of the Beni-Flitas, who had thrown off the yoke of Abd-el-Kader, and proceeded in the direction of the Cheliff.

At the decline of day we stopped at a *douar*.

The Arabs call a *douar* the collection of several tents placed in a circle, and surrounded by thorn bushes, forming a kind of enclosure, in which they protect their herds during the night. Each tent is guarded by two or three dogs, which never cease barking. All the tribes, as all the Arab cities, are filled with dogs, which, during the night, make a dreadful noise.

Although the douar at which we had just arrived is situated in a very fertile and well-cultivated country, for we saw nothing but stubble on all sides, they served us a dish of detestable couscoussou. The young marabout himself in vain recited several prayers in presence of the Arabs of the douar, he could not obtain better food; we supped very ill, and suffered very much from the cold, in spite of the mats with which we were covered.

On the third day after our departure from Mascara, we marched until the evening without a moment's rest. The ground we passed over was very stony, and covered with brambles; the feet of the prisoners were in a deplorable condition, their slippers being completely worn out. The horseman who accompanied us set off at full gallop at mid-day, and brought back with him some bad barley cakes. We each received half of one.

After a forced march, ascending the Cheliff, the banks of which are inhabited by numerous tribes, we encamped for the night in a village, of which all the houses were built of mud. They lodged us in a miserable hovel, the walls of which were in ruins. They served us some couscoussou of beans. We were without fire the whole night, and the cold tormented us dreadfully. The prisoners were exhausted with fatigue—their feet were torn—sorrow and dejection had spread over us, when M. Pic entered the room, uttering dreadful cries—a dog had bitten his leg. The wound was not serious, it was a scratch; but he cried out, he wept to such a

degree, that we overwhelmed him with jokes, and, thanks to this event, forgot our fatigue and sufferings for a moment.

We marched all the next day without stopping. We passed the ruins of a Spanish town; there were no houses or walls standing, but we perceived a large quantity of freestone.

We met some horsemen, who, as soon as they saw us, prepared their arms, and disposed themselves to attack us. Our Kaït advanced from the escort, and went to meet them. Then, to frighten us, or as a sign of rejoicing, the horsemen dashed towards us at full speed, aiming at us with their guns, and fired several shots between the legs of our mules; they then drew their sabres, directing them at our heads, and pretended to be about to strike us. Madame Laurent was very much terrified, and an Arab very near threw her on the earth, by catching hold of the bales on which she was seated. At last, after having completed their evolutions, they pursued their journey towards Mascara.

During the whole day we suffered very much; our mules were fatigued, and stumbled at every step. We arrived before sunset in a little village, where, from all I have heard and seen, I have reason to think an Aga of the plain of Miliana had his residence. They made us enter a large house, situated in the principal square; the interior formed a single room; it was large, and shewed by its whole arrangement that it was destined for the reception of travellers.

They stretched at one end of the room mats, on which we seated ourselves; at the other extremity, the Arabs, crouched round a large fire, were preparing coffee. I thought they sold it, and requested to have two cups, one for Madame Laurent and one for myself, adding, that I had sufficient mousounés to pay for them. One of the chiefs replied,—

“You think, then, the Aga is not sufficiently rich, and requires a mousouné to give you some coffee.”

“I did not know the coffee belonged to the Aga. I am far from doubting his generosity.”

The slaves brought sumptuous cushions and a beautiful divan, far more elegant and comfortable than those used by Abd-el-Kader. The Aga, magnificently dressed, entered, accompanied by our Kaït, the young marabout, and several other chiefs. They seated themselves on the cushions and carpets, and began, while conversing, to take their coffee and smoke their long pipes.

I approached the Aga, and said to him,—

“I come to ask your pardon. I knew not the coffee they were preparing was yours—I wished to buy some. They answered me, that an Aga as rich and as powerful as you never sold what belonged to him, but that he made presents. I am ill; a woman who is with us is also ill. Will you give us a cup of coffee?”

The Aga had two cups brought for us; and ordered his slaves to conduct Madame Laurent and

the little boy to his wife's house, where both met a most benevolent reception, and every kind of good treatment.

The room we occupied presented a novel and amusing sight.

In one corner, the Christians, seated round a fire, were conversing of their misery and their sufferings. One could read in their pale faces all the sufferings and tortures they had endured. The greater number were occupied in dressing the wounds which covered their feet, torn and bleeding from the rocks and brambles on their long journey. A plaintive murmur arose from the circle. The momentary ease revived the prisoners' strength, but at the same time an acute pain, which shot through their limbs, exhausted by so many hard trials, and benumbed by fatigue and weakness.

A few paces from us the Arabs, reclined on superb cushions, in a circle at the Aga's feet, who, in his splendid dress, resembled a sultan, were gravely smoking their pipes and drinking their coffee. The flame from the fire-place cast an uncertain light over their pale and lengthened faces, and impressed them with a fierce and formidable expression. They were conversing on the projects and position of Abd-el-Kader; and, occasionally, when their conversation turned on the Christians, the eyes of the speakers shot forth a vivid flash, anger was legible on their lips; and we might fancy we saw the worthy descendants of the wandering race, which, in past ages, invaded Chris-

tian Europe, and defiled the churches and holy houses, by planting their crescent on the steeples and towers which rose over them.

At the hour of prayer, the young marabout rose and recited it. The Arabs did the same, with much devotion; and I, from my corner, observed the scene, in which I was the most tranquil performer.

They brought some dishes of couscoussou for the Aga's supper. We had half a roast sheep upon a dish of couscoussou.

This strengthening repast, and the excellent night we passed on mats near the fire, did not a little contribute to revive our strength, exhausted by so much fatigue; and we felt some regret on quitting, at day-break, the village where we had met with such generous and liberal hospitality. The Aga who treated us so well must be very rich, for every thing belonging to him was on an extensive and splendid scale.

We marched for six hours, exposed, as usual, to the hooting, the insults, the blows of the Arabs who accompanied us. We arrived at a spot where the camp of the Bey of Miliana had been just pitched. At the moment of our entering the camp, the Bey and Milloud-Ben-Harrach, whom Abd-el-Kader, on setting out from Mascara, had sent among the Hadjoutis, also entered, escorted by all his cavalry. They paid them the honours I have already described, when I related our life in the camp of the Sultan. The horsemen of the Bey are much better clothed and far richer than those on the coast

of Oran. The improvement in their dress is rendered necessary, by the severity of the cold which reigns in this quarter. Two pieces of cannon defended the camp.

Milloud-Ben-Harrach and the Bey conversed with apparent cordiality. A report had been spread that a misunderstanding existed between these two chiefs. They are deceived; the most perfect concord, the sincerest intimacy, existed between the Bey and Milloud-Ben-Harrach.

They announced our arrival to the Bey. We were placed before his tent; he cast a glance at us, and made a sign to our Kaït to lead us away, who conducted us to a small tent not large enough to hold us all. They only gave us a morsel of bad biscuit, so hard that it was necessary to soak it in water to chew it. We had no fire, consequently the cold prevented our sleeping.

The coffee maker of Milloud Ben-Harrach (they are usually Turks) had known me well, and Meurice also, when we were in Abd-el-Kader's camp. This good man, having learnt the arrival of the Christian prisoners, immediately hastened to our tent. He brought two cups of coffee on a tray, which he intended offering to Meurice and me. I told him the death of my friend. The Turk was affected with my description of his miserable end. He pressed me to accept the coffee. I gave one cup to Madame Laurent, who was still unwell, and drank the other myself. At day-break the Arabs struck the camp; they followed exactly the same method which I have remarked in the camp of

Abd-el-Kader. Milloud-Ben-Harrach took the road for Mascara, and the Bey of Miliana gained the mountains which border the sea, on the coast of Chercell. He was on his way to attack a tribe who had refused to pay the impost. On the road to Miliana, where we arrived after six hours' march, we crossed the Cheliff by a very handsome bridge, built in the European form, and which is not more than thirty years old.

Having reached the south end of the town, we left the plain to ascend the mountain on which Miliana is built. They reckon it an hour and a half's march from the plain to the town. Miliana is commanded, on the north, by a mountain of greater elevation than that on which it is built, the summit of which is surmounted by a Marabout and a signal-pole.

The town is well built; the houses are lofty, and terraces do not supply the place of roofs, as in the other Arab cities. Tiles similar to those used in the south of France, of a long and rounded shape, cover the houses; the streets are narrow and dirty. A simple wall of moderate height, embattled, and fortified with two pieces of cannon, surrounds the town. Two gates contrived in the wall, one to the east, the other to the west, form the entrance into Miliana.

On the south, the eminence on which the town is placed offers to the view only inaccessible rocks, covered with briars, thorns, and brambles. To the east and west, well cultivated gardens, filled with every description of fruit trees, the fruits of

which grow to a remarkable size, cover the mountain. At the foot of the hill, which borders the town on the north, are the kitchen gardens, which produce the species of vegetable in season. Thus, the Arabs grow only cabbages during their season, and only sow the turnip seed at the favourable moment for the growth of that vegetable, and so on with others.

The easiest approach to this town is from Mascara, by the road from Oran, although the mountain is thickly wooded and covered with mastic, holm, pines, cypress, and olive trees. On this side, an hour and a half's walk leads to Miliana, whilst in the other directions it is necessary to walk the whole day to reach the town. A very abundant spring, rising in the larger mountain in the north, supplies all the fountains, and conducts the water by subterranean aqueducts into the houses of the richest and principal inhabitants.

There is only one mosque and one synagogue. The Casbah is built in the south; two pieces of cannon, the mouths of which are directed towards the side, rendered inaccessible by the position of the rocks and the nature of the ground, defend the town. A small square outside the western gate is used as a market place. The Arabs of the surrounding country bring there a great number of beasts. They have erected numerous sheds in the town, to shelter the fruit, vegetables, and butter merchants. The numerous shops, inhabited by blacksmiths, locksmiths, carpenters, joiners, bakers (who sell white bread), shoemakers, woollen drapers,

potters, show the industry of the inhabitants, whose appearance is much more animated and wealthy than those of Mascara; it contains also a few small bazaars. The population must be about 3,000 souls, among whom there are a great number of Jews. These last all exercise one calling; they are very industrious, and make themselves very useful, even indispensable, to the Arabs. Nevertheless, their condition is extremely miserable; they are not exactly slaves, but the natives look upon them as a race inferior to themselves; they ill-use them, treat them with every mark of disdain, always conduct themselves as their masters, and seek every opportunity of deceiving them, and extortioning their merchandise and money.

The houses of the Jews are remarkable for their cleanliness, in the exterior as well as interior. They are always busy in white-washing the walls. In spite of the annoyances to which they are daily subject, they enjoy a certain degree of ease. The Jewish women are, in general, pretty, and are extremely neat and cleanly, both in their dress and toilette, and which we are the more surprised at meeting with among savages.

We passed through the town, in the midst of the hootings of the population, and were conducted to the Casbah. Our chief counted and recounted his prisoners, and presented them to the Kaït, who governs the town during the absence of the Bey.

After this interview, they shut us up in a stable, from whence they made us proceed to take up our lodging in the house where the Bey distributes

justice. Madame Laurent and Benedicto were taken to the Kaït's wives, where, doubtless, a less miserable and less frightful lodging awaited them than ours; for, in proportion the moment of our deliverance approached, the harder and more insupportable became our sufferings and privations.

I have often heard women and children, kneeling before the altar of the Virgin, in our sea-ports, entreat the mother of God to assist the sailor and the prisoner. Alas! continue your prayers, for the sailor and the prisoner are exposed to severe afflictions, and to dreadful misfortunes; pray for the seafaring man, whose vessel is shattered by the tempest; pray for the prisoner, groaning in infected dungeons, upon the cold and damp earth. He is, perhaps, breathing his last sigh, without a friend to hear his lamentation, or dry the tears which flow in the painful agonies of death.

CHAPTER XIX.

PRISON OF MILIANA.—DECEPTIONS.—DELAY IN OUR EXCHANGE.—SICKNESS.—HISTORY OF THE DESERTER MOUSSA.—FALSEHOODS. IDENTITY DISCOVERED.—REPENTANCE.—DEPARTURE FOR THE HADJOUTIS.—RETURN TO MILIANA.—BENEVOLENCE.—FALSEHOODS.—FOUR HEADS.—CRIMES OF MOUSSA.—A LETTER.—HE IS CONDUCTED TO THE SULTAN TO GIVE AN ACCOUNT OF HIS CONDUCT.—WHAT MUST HAVE BEEN HIS END.

I HAVE said we had been conducted to a house where the Bey of Miliana holds his court. This house contained a court-yard; at the four corners four orange trees, one of which in particular was magnificent and covered with fruit, had shaded this enclosure for years. A cock turned into a little basin the quantity of water necessary for domestic purposes. Three small rooms had been contrived on the ground floor. In the first story the slaves prepared the Bey's coffee; the second served as a prison to the condemned Arabs; the third, the use of which I am ignorant of before our arrival, became the dungeon in which we were to conceal our misery and our misfortune.

Between the second and third room, a staircase, covered by a kind of shed, under which slept our guardians, led to the first floor. This story formed one vast apartment, the ceiling of which is supported by pillars, and in which the Bey gives audience.

The Arabs who groaned in this abode as prisoners were of some of those whose tribes had submitted to the French. The greater part were in irons, the others in stocks. The stocks are formed of two pieces of strong wood, in which two holes are contrived. In these they enclose the prisoner's feet, and the unfortunate man can neither rise nor walk. The condition in which these poor fellows were was truly deplorable. They cruelly atoned for the sympathy which had induced them to embrace the French cause. The chamber we inhabited was dark, small, cold, and damp. The daylight entered only by a hole in the door, which opened into the court. We were able to go out and walk in the court, but during our stay at Miliana the weather prevented it, as it never ceased snowing and raining the whole time.

In the morning we had only a bad barley cake, filled with stones and earth, and in the evening they gave us a handful of boiled barley, and it was so diluted in water, that we had not even the satisfaction of putting it into our mouths with our fingers. A food thus dirty and scanty, the cold and damp to which we were exposed, without the power of protecting ourselves, as we had no fire, must naturally have given rise to new sufferings and diseases, the termination of which presented itself before us in mournful and dismal colours. Bourgeois, who so far had enjoyed good health, fell sick; the cold seized his legs and body. We passed our days in rubbing him.

The fatigue of so long a journey had inflamed

the wound of the German, Monsieur Pic's servant. Mardulin was no longer with us, and we had neither honey nor butter to dress the wound, which began to emit a bad odour. We were cast down by so many privations, but still despair and discouragement had not yet gained possession of us. The chiefs of our escort had given us the assurance that we should set out for Algiers three days after our arrival at Miliana, and we awaited with impatience the end of our captivity in this town. But we were soon cruelly undeceived.

The days rolled on, and each night saw our prison door close upon us. In proportion as the period fixed for our deliverance grew distant, the future presented itself in more gloomy colours; despair cast its dread over our minds, while misery and disease each day spread its ravages on our bodies. The instructions our chiefs had given to the Kaït of Miliana with regard to us must have been very undefined, since he did not know what to do with us. The Kaït wrote to Abd-el-Kader, entreating him to point out those whose exchange was to take place. He had not sent our names. The Sultan replied to him to ask the Christians which of them desired to go to Algiers. I am certain Abd-el-Kader intended sending us all.

We were twelve Christians; they gave in return fifteen Arabs. But the Kaït pretended not to understand the orders of his master. He ordered me to write to Algiers, to inform the General of the death of Meurice and Berthumian, and to inform him that, in the place of these prisoners, he would

send two other Christians. Thus the agreement to exchange the six French for the fifteen Arabs would be maintained.

I wished to make the Kaït see how exorbitant his demand was ; he ordered me to be silent, and not to say a word to my companions in misfortune, who were expecting their liberty, but of whose presence among the Arabs the French authorities were still ignorant, putting off to a future period the question of their exchange. He himself wrote to Algiers a letter in Arabic, which was doubtless a duplicate of mine. All these negociations, all these delays, in an affair so simple, and of so little importance to those who managed it, excited among us an irritation and despair impossible to describe. Our prison became more odious and hateful from day to day. Those among us who until now had resisted the tortures and hardships to which we had been subject, gave way in their turn. Cold and fever compelled us to pass the days and nights stretched upon the damp and offensive ground of the dungeon in which we were imprisoned. Crescenso and Francesco had lost all hope and confidence; they no longer believed in their exchange; and this discouragement, joined to cold and misery, had stifled in their hearts all courage and energy.

These two young fishermen began to complain, and acute pain nailed them to their corner, by the side of Bourgeois and the German. Monsieur Pic was ill; Monsieur Lanternier was visibly declining, and delirium was already disturbing his mind.

In the midst of so many sufferings, the presence of the Bey of Miliana was impatiently expected by each of us. We thought this important personage would alleviate our condition, and hasten our deliverance. But he did not arrive.

During these continual inquietudes and torments, we one day received the visit of a deserter, whose life and position among the Arabs are too curious to be passed over in silence. The principal misdeeds of this bandit have reached the ears of the Generals who command our troops in Algiers. I think they will not read the adventures of Moussa without interest.

We had already seen this deserter ; but I have deferred until this moment speaking of the meeting, in order to introduce this episode entire. I know nothing more fatiguing than to follow, through the numerous pages of a book, from chapter to chapter, the continuation and conclusion of an interesting history. Moreover, by the side of the mournful description of our misery at Miliana, this picture of romantic events will form a contrast to the scenes of desolation which I have still to place before the reader's eye.

I return to the recital.

Abd-el-Kader was encamped on the banks of the Ouet-Mina. The day began to close in ; I was walking with Meurice before our tent, when we saw an Arab and a man pass in company, the former without a bernou, and the latter in the uniform of the Spahis. The last made his horse prance, and had a striking appearance. The Arabs

pointed them out to us, saying, "There is a Christian." The deserter had nevertheless embraced Mahomedism. We continued our walk without paying further attention to these two horsemen, who proceeded to the tent of Abd-el-Kader.

Soon after, a negro came to tell us that Moussa, the Christian, wished to speak with us.

"Go and tell Moussa, if he wishes to speak with us, he has only to come here, for we are not free to go where we choose."

The negro had scarcely departed, than we saw a man approaching us, of lofty stature, wearing a long and flowing beard, with a dignified, or rather insolent bearing.

"I am much astonished," exclaimed he, with disdain, and addressing us angrily, "that dogs of Christians, such as you, refuse to come to me, when a man as great and as powerful as Moulin has summoned them."

"Night is approaching. Ben-Faka forbids us to be distant from the tent at this hour."

"My fame has not then reached you? Your fate is in my hands."

"We know you not."

"I am Moulin. It is four years since I separated myself from the French. I command-in-chief the armies of the Sultan; I conduct his Arabs to victory; I cast terror and death into the ranks of the Christians; it is I who, returning from battle, always bring back, suspended to my saddle-bow, the heads of four Frenchmen, killed by my own hand."

“My good sir, do you think you are this moment conversing with fools?”

“What say you, wretch?”

“I say that our soldiers believe in the existence of Moulin. The name of that deserter still inspires them with terror; for he has distinguished himself among the Arabs, after his infamous desertion, by his courage; but he has been long since dead—he is a being of pure fiction. We believe not in ghosts.”

“I am Moulin, I tell you, dog of a Christian; and am called Moussa since I have embraced the religion of the true believers. My power and my authority have no limits. I am this moment going to the tent of my friend Abd-el-Kader, to decide upon your fate.”

“Very well; use your influence with Abd-el-Kader in our favour. Endeavour to facilitate our return to Algiers. But it is growing late; Ben-Faka insists upon our entering our tent before night sets in. Good night.” And we left this singular being.

“While you were talking with him,” said Meurice to me, “I watched him attentively. His features are not unknown to me; I think I have often seen him in Paris. He will return tomorrow. Turn the conversation upon Paris and the Theatres; and while you are talking, I will observe the impression made on his countenance by your words.”

Moussa presented himself before us with the same assurance, and the same presumption, as on the preceding day.

“I have not yet thought of you,” said he; “but your turn will come to-day. The affairs I have to regulate with my friend, the Sultan, are so numerous, and of so high importance.”

“I can easily conceive that the duties of General-in-Chief of the armies of the Sultan leave you but little leisure, and I am far from being astonished.”

“It is indeed true that my occupations are numerous. Your dogs of generals give us some trouble; but I hope soon to have entirely finished with them.”

“The task you have before you is difficult.”

“So much the better; my glory will be the greater.”

“Mille Tonnerres! what power on earth can resist my friend, the Sultan Abd-el-Kader, when Moulin leads his armies?”

“You persist, then, even to-day, in passing for Moulin?”

“You are very obstinate, dog of a Christian. I am Moulin. Answer me. Have not the French soldiers, on returning from battle, related that the Arab battalions were commanded by the terrible Moulin?”

“Yes.”

“Very well; then why do you refuse to recognise me as Moulin?”

“I can with difficulty comprehend the credulity of the soldiers. I have heard them relate they had seen Moulin in the midst of the affray. The recollection of this deserter is constantly present to

their minds, and causes them some terror. But it is no matter whether you are or are not Moulin; I will acknowledge you to be whomever you wish. At any rate you occupy a brilliant post."

"Very brilliant."

"Your fate is glorious; but do you not sometimes regret, in the midst of an existence so unsettled and so full of privations, in a half barbarous country, the life you must have led in our own country? Comfort, luxury, and pleasures are unknown here. In France, life is so easy, so abundantly furnished with delightful and varied amusements. Are you acquainted with Paris?"

"If I am acquainted with Paris? It is the city in which I was born."

"A Parisian child imbibes with its mother's milk the desire of enjoyment. It is the city of pleasure and delight; it is the city of balls, and it is the city of my predilection. There the concerts, the museums, the theatres!"

"Oh!" exclaimed Moussa, with vivacity, "the theatres—I went there every evening."

"Which did you frequent the most?"

"The Odéon was the theatre I preferred."

"The Odéon!" suddenly interrupted Meurice, with an energy I had never seen him display before. "The Odéon! You are an impostor. Your name is neither Moulin nor Moussa; you are called Monsieur——. I know you; yes, Sir, and well. You came every evening to the proprietor's boxes of the Odéon Theatre. You were a child—I have held you on my knees. Your sister was a

charming actress. My name is Meurice." At this vehement address, Moussa remained amazed and dumb. Meurice continued,—

"Since that period I have lost sight of you—you have grown; but I have heard of you. You turned out a wild fellow—a vagabond; you entered into the cavalry; you were transferred to the infantry; but your restless and insupportable temper drew upon you the animadversion of your officers, and you were placed in the drill corps. You deserted from that body, and entered the African battalion; and, last of all, the Spahis, of which you still wear the uniform. I heard of your desertion in the prisons of Mascara. It is only four months since you were a soldier, and you have abandoned your colours.

"I know you well, Sir. I see on your waistcoat the remains of a ribbon—the cloth is less worn: you saved the life of a woman who was drowning, and your officers, in recompence for this generous action, attached a medal to your button-hole.

"You may call yourself Moussa, since you have deserted both your country and your religion; but your name, before this infamous apostacy, was that I have just pronounced, and I now pass over in silence, out of respect for your family. The dishonour with which you are covered will never reflect upon her; the qualities which distinguish her are appreciated by all who have the honour of knowing her."

"You are right, Sir," exclaimed Moussa, despair and suffering painted on his features. "I am a

miserable, dishonoured man. You know only a part of my life. I was wrong in deserting, but I only met from my officers injustice and bad treatment. I am far from being satisfied with my present condition. I am unhappy, and wish to re-visit Europe. I am endeavouring to gain the favour of Abd-el-Kader, in order to scrape together some money. When I shall have collected a sum sufficient to defray the expense of the journey, I intend going to Morocco, and awaiting a vessel to convey me to the shores of Spain.

“But, be assured, Monsieur Meurice, the vexations to which I had been exposed, were the only causes which determined me on joining the Arabs, and I long struggled against the fatal idea; but I was not able to bow my head under injustice; and if I have some faults, I cruelly expiate them, for I am very unhappy.”

“Very good,” resumed Meurice, “continue to speak in this manner, and you will inspire interest, instead of the disgust your first address excited in me, as it would in any honest man, who should hear their God and their country blasphemed. But why these gross falsehoods, these impudent artifices? We are very unhappy—the condition of prisoners is dreadful; still, we would not change our fate for yours; and, nevertheless, misery and bad treatment may soon end our lives. You are young; employ your time and strength in repairing the errors you have committed. The way of repentance is not closed against you for ever—you know there is mercy for every sinner.”

“ You make me listen to severe truths, Monsieur, and still I am far from wishing you ill. I assure you I am ashamed of the life I lead, and from this day will endeavour to change it.”

We continued this conversation for some time; Moussa expressed his repentance. On account of his sorrow and suffering,—for the lot of deserter, like that of every soldier who should enter the service of the Arabs, was as bad and as deserving of pity as our own,—we forgot his crimes, the impudence with which he accosted us, and ended by becoming interested in the unfortunate man.

He was lodged in the tent of Milloud-Ben-Harrach, commandant of the cavalry; but as he took his meals with the Sultan, Moussa was compelled to eat with the slaves of this chief; he also often came to our tent, and shared our food with us.

At last, Abd-el-Kader gave him a horse, a bernou, sabre, and gun, and sent him, at his own request, to the Hadjoutis, among whom he had lived since his desertion. Moussa set out, after having expressed the regret our separation caused him, and after having promised Abd-el-Kader to bring him every month the heads of four Frenchmen.

We never saw him return.

One day, then, during our captivity at Miliana, Moussa came to visit our prison. The Bey had not returned. I felt some pleasure in seeing him again, and related the tale of our misery.

“ I am quite at your service,” replied he. “ The power and credit I enjoy among the Arabs, are

now established upon a solid basis. I command the cavalry of the Hadjoutis. Abd-el-Kader has summoned me—I am going to join him. I promise to press him on the subject of your exchange. I hope never to revisit the coast of Algiers; I intend effecting my passage to Spain.”

He went out after these words, and sent me some bread and a shirt; I was so unhappy that I accepted it, thinking him still influenced by the same feeling of repentance. But I soon changed the good opinion this impudent fellow had inspired me with.

During his absence, a Hadjouti (a very powerful and very rich tribe of the plain of Mitidja) told us, that in a skirmish in the month of November, he had cut off the heads of three officers of the Spahis, and that I must have seen the fourteen heads at Mascara.

In the mean while Moussa returned.

“I am going to set out, my friends. I have sent you a trifle; but I must husband my resources.”

“I thank you in the name of my companions, and particularly in my own name.”

“If I pass here again,” continued he, “and you are still here, I promise to give you all your desire, for I shall have my purse well filled. Abd-el-Kader has to pay me for the heads I cut off last month, in the rencontre with the Spahis; and he will pay well for them, for I sent the heads of three officers. On arriving at Algiers, they will tell you the news of my courage and prowess; for after having decapitated an officer and stripped

him, I wrote with the point of my sabre on his back, in letters carved in his flesh, M—— 1836.”

On hearing him heap falsehood on falsehood, and boast of the disasters suffered by our troops, and rejoicing in the death of his countrymen, we could not restrain our indignation.

“Wretch, villain,” exclaimed all the prisoners, “out from hence!”

“I shall not depart! Am I not your master, dogs of Christians?”

“Out from hence, wretch, or we shall kill you! You are unworthy to appear before Christians.”

During this discussion, I hastened to call the Hadjouti, and told him that Moussa pretended to have cut off the heads which he boasted of.

“How,” exclaimed the Hadjouti, “can you lend your ears to the words of that dog?”

“You say you cut off the heads of the three officers. Moussa, you lie. You cut off the heads of the Christians! But you are a coward, a boaster. You fled as soon as we engaged the Christians. You fled, dog as you are; it is true, before the battle, you boasted of your address and courage.”

The Hadjouti then, turning towards us, continued in these words:

“This deserter is a robber, and a braggart.”

“You should not speak thus,” cried Moussa, “if you were alone in the midst of a plain.”

“Why?”

“Because my sabre should quickly impose silence.”

“Your sabre, wretch!—you shall not keep it

long. You are a robber and infamous fellow. Listen. He has told you he was going to the Sultan?"

"To his friend, Abd-el-Kader."

"To his friend! The Sultan summons him to give an account of the horse and bernou he gave him, and which he has sold. With the money he obtained for them, he bought wine in a house in Brida, and made himself drunk. Where is there a robber like Moussa?"

"He said he had cut off four heads. He fled when he found himself opposed to the Christians. It is I who cut off the four heads, and, nevertheless, he wished to claim the price of them."

"Where is the robber and villain like Moussa?"

"I will revenge myself, sooner or later," replied Moussa.

"Out of our prison," cried the prisoners, "or we will save the chaos the trouble of inflicting the punishment your crimes deserve."

Moussa wished to reply, but we joined the Arab, we overwhelmed him with reproaches, and compelled him to leave the prison.

A few moments afterwards, a negro brought a letter from Moussa, containing these words:

"As I do not wish a dog of a Christian like you to retain anything of a Mussulman, so great, so powerful, as I am, I command you to deliver up to the bearer of this letter the shirt I gave you yesterday. I am going to seek my friend, Abd-el-Kader, and shall do my utmost to have your head

cut off, and, moreover, if I should not succeed, and you are exchanged, hope not to see your family, for orders are already given and arrangements made to carry you all off as soon as you have passed Boufarick.

“I pledge you my word of honour.

“MOUSSA,

“General-in-Chief of the armies of the Sultan.”

On my return, General Rapatel showed me letters written by this singular being, and which he had signed Moussa, Lieutenant-General of the armies of Abd-el-Kader.

This letter excited the mirth of my companions, and we burned the shirt reclaimed by this bandit with so much importance and haughtiness.

We never saw him again ; but I learned a few days afterwards, from a deserter from the Spahis, who spoke French, that two soldiers of the Bey of Miliana were charged with conducting Moussa before Abd-el-Kader. The Bey in his letter to the Sultan said, “This dog of a Christian has not only not cut off the heads which he boasts of having sent to Mascara, but also has sold the horse, bernou, and gun you had given him, and bought wine at Brida with the money. I have taken away his sabre, the only weapon he retained. He has other crimes to reproach himself with. I have ordered two chaous to drag him before you to render an account of his crimes, and in order that you may

inflict on this dog of a Christian the punishment he deserves." With such a letter from the Bey, Moussa must have met his death in the camp of Abd-el-Kader, accused of falsehood, theft, and other misdeeds.

CHAPTER XX.

CRUEL CONDITION OF THE CHRISTIAN DESERTERS AMONG THE ARAB TRIBES.—ARRIVAL OF THE BEY OF MILIANA.—PUBLIC REJOICINGS.—HOPE.—THE RHAMADAN.—CONSTERNATION OF THE PRISONERS.—HORRIBLE SITUATION.—THE BEY PAYS HIS TROOPS.—PROMISE OF GOOD TREATMENT.—PORTRAIT OF THE BEY.—ARRIVAL OF THE JEW DURAND AT MILIANA.—HIS MISSION TO THE SULTAN.—M. LANTERNIER.—THE BEY'S HOUSE.—HIS TWO DAUGHTERS.—MADAME LAURENT AND BENEDICTO.—WE LEAVE MILIANA.

THE visit of Moussa had made a diversion in the painful reflections which constantly agitated our minds. We conversed of this adventurer long after his departure. His falsehoods, his effrontery, the laughable letter he had addressed to me, reclaiming the shirt I had not hesitated accepting in my distress, preserved some gaiety in our discourse, until then impressed with such complete discouragement and painful melancholy. Still I could not help reflecting, soon after Moussa's departure, on the miserable and bloody end which his strange conduct in the ranks of the French army, and among the Arabs, had brought him to. Moussa had doubtless flattered himself, that, in deserting, he could acquire with Abd-el-Kader the wealth, the importance, and celebrity, his restless and stirring mind urged him constantly to strive for. His bad habits, his daily debaucheries, his vices, fruit of an ill-directed imagination, had rendered him un-

worthy of obtaining, in his regiment, the advancement bravery, zeal, and application are always sure of obtaining. The same causes, the same irregularities, cast him to the bottom of a still deeper abyss among the Arabs, whose assistance and hospitality he had claimed, and his strange conduct disgusted even these barbarians, to whom he had offered the assistance of his arm.

Moussa must have been cruelly undeceived after a few hours' stay in the tents of our enemies. The same disappointment awaits all deserters. These unfortunate men expect to meet, on abandoning their colours, wealth, advancement, and consideration : they find only contempt and misery. Abdel-Kader and all his officers have not the least consideration for deserters. The Sultan always begins by asking them what they intend to do, and offers to send them to Morocco, from whence they may reach the coasts of Spain. As they are deprived of all resources, they request to remain, and enrol themselves under the Sultan's standard. In the camp they heap insults and threats upon them, and often refuse them even the necessary food and clothing. Since the day when the Arabs, in a skirmish with our troops, fired at three deserters they had placed in advance of their lines, and killed them, the deserters will no longer go to battle. They, in that case, drag their rags and hunger from tribe to tribe, from town to town, and at last die from fatigue and want. The reader need only call to mind the deserter from the foreign regiment. He has seen that those who chanced to

be in the camp of the Sultan, situated at the gates of Mascara, preferred sharing our provisions and prison to accompanying Abd-el-Kader in his new expedition. They came to join us at Mascara, and had followed us to Miliana, and still our condition was one of the most severe and grievous.

In general, the deserters are soldiers who escape to the Arabs to avoid the punishment which the crimes they have committed have rendered them liable to. If they knew the infamy, the misery with which the Arabs overwhelm the unfortunate men who take refuge in their tents, they would never, in the first place, commit a crime serious enough, and secondly, they would resign themselves to undergo the punishment to which they are condemned; for, in avoiding one misfortune, they fall into a greater, and in flying from our army they disunite for ever (the exceptions are rare) the bonds which bound them to their country, and expose themselves voluntarily, in the midst of a strange and hostile country, to encounter death at every step. The refugee will in vain abjure Christianity, shave his head, wrap himself in a haick, speak Arabic; and he will always hear these words resounding in his ears, which admirably express, and in a manner as short as energetic, the sentiments of his hosts with regard to him—"Dog of a Christian!" Our condition, far from improving, grew worse from day to day. At last our guards announced to us the approaching arrival of the Bey. He was sure to return to Miliana, to pass the Rhamadan (the Easter of the Arabs). This

intelligence revived our sunken courage, and we foresaw the moment of our deliverance.

The report of cannon and musquetry informed us one morning that the Bey, Mahidin-el-Hadjjel-Schir-Ben-Moubarek, was passing through the town on the return from his expedition, and proceeding to his dwelling. We shared, for an instant, the joy and satisfaction of the inhabitants. These salvos of artillery, and signs of rejoicing, made our hearts bound. We saluted, from the bottom of our dungeon, the Bey on his passage; for his presence put an end to our sufferings, and admitted hope and liberty into the prison, in which we stretched our arms towards him. Our joy was of short duration. We no longer heard the cannons or muskets celebrating the Bey's welcome; the murmurs which reigned in the town gradually ceased, dying away at the foot of our prison wall; the bitterness and desolation banished for the moment quickly returned, more intense and more severely felt than ever. The Bey came not to visit his prisoners, and we sunk again into the dejection from which the news of his arrival had for an instant aroused us.

Much has been said respecting the elevation of soul, of the nobleness, and of the generosity of the Arab chiefs and marabouts. I have often heard their exquisite sensibility boasted of, their wonderful politeness, their tact under circumstances most opposite to their manners and religious education. All the accounts written on this subject are, alas! but dreams; or fictions arising rather from the

favourable dispositions of the writers than from a careful observation of facts. Marabouts, Beys, Kaïts, in spite of the words of Abd-el-Kader, so full of benevolence, in spite of his conduct, and expressions of anxiety and consideration for us, have only been prodigal of insults and threats towards us. The Sultan took pity on our hard fate; the favourable condition of the Arabs at Marseilles affected him in a lively manner, and he was sincerely anxious to repay us for the kindness shown his captive subjects; while the men who surrounded him forgot our misery, the remembrance of their countrymen, prisoners in a foreign land, never ceased heaping upon us the most cruel annoyances, and did not even fulfil the instructions the Sultan dictated to them in our presence.

Thus the Bey of Miliana was informed of the project for our exchange; he knew the hard condition in which we were placed. He did not make a single step, he did not utter a single word, which could afford any alleviation to our misfortune, which became more unbearable as we approached the term fixed for our deliverance. He cared little for our complaints and sighs, in return for the expressions of joy and thankfulness which the captives at Marseilles sent to the Sultan in proof of the care and good treatment shown them by the French; we were, in his eyes, only dogs of Christians, and deserved neither help nor pity. A dungeon and death are all an Arab, in spite of his title and distinctions, conceives to be the lot of a dog of a Christian. And certainly, although I here

state, in rather harsh terms, the brutality to which the Christian prisoners here are victims, it is not that I blame the humane attention paid by General Bugeaud to the Arabs sent to Marseilles. The conduct I have shown towards them, on passing through that town, will show the joy I experienced at these wise and mild measures adopted by the authorities; but in mentioning this brutality, it is that I am not able to repress a feeling of indignation which imperiously controls my recollections.

These men, whose good qualities some philosophers boast of, are still far from equalling us. Consider, then, that, instead of tolerance, resignation, Christian charity, their prophet breathes hatred, vengeance, ruin against all those who bow not the head at these marvellous words, "*God is God, and Mahomet is his prophet!*"

Allowing, even for a moment, the intellectual and moral superiority of a few chiefs, can you believe they possess a spirit of virtue sufficiently powerful, sufficiently active, sufficiently inspiring, to move and convince these barbarous, warlike, and thieving hordes, who follow in their train, or disperse over the plains or mountains according to their fancy, or caprice of the moment?

And do you not think, on seeing the ignorance, the ferocity, the craftiness, the cupidity, do you not think, I say, that the chiefs must have become accustomed to associate with men still classed, in spite of the brilliant position they occupied in the world in ages now long gone by, in the lowest step of the social ladder?

It is a difficult task to guide a nation, and it requires, in the times we live in, more than a rude and uncivilized genius to improve the physical and moral condition of a people ; it requires a firm and experienced hand to force it into the path of advancement, and to mark out, in the distant horizon, the point towards which they ought to direct all their efforts, all their passions, all their labours.

The festival of the Rhamadan had caused the Bey's return to Miliana. This holy solemnity, far from rousing the pity of the Bey, found him indifferent and forgetful of our misery. During the Rhamadan, the Arabs fast the whole day, and take no refreshment but at sunset, and two hours after midnight. Drummers pass through the town at two o'clock at night, and by the noise of their drums announce to the Faithful that they may take their repast.

Our guards profited by the Rhamadan to curtail our dish of boiled barley ; they replaced it with a cake which was to be divided between two prisoners. They often promised to bring us, at two o'clock in the morning, a good dish of couscoussou ; for the abstinence we had to suffer began to affect our health severely. But if they chanced to have a dish of couscoussou to give us in the middle of the night, they did not take the trouble to enter our apartment ; they gently opened the door, and if we did not call to them, closed it again without noise, and hastened to devour the provisions destined for us.

The snow and rain never ceased falling. The

room we inhabited was so dark, that the absence of light deprived us of another relief and solace ; we could not even hunt the vermin, and we were covered with them from head to foot. We were all disconsolate. The greater number of the prisoners were persuaded the Sultan had only sent us to Miliana to let us die of hunger and cold in the prisons of that town, and that we should never be restored to liberty ; for I may truly say, we had never been so exposed to such severe trials.

Fleury, Bourgeois, Crescenso, the German, M. Lanternier, stretched on the ground, suffering from cold and fever, were no longer able to rise. In the midst of the obscurity which reigned in our chamber, were heard the moanings of these unhappy men. Crescenso never ceased groaning ; he spoke only of Genoa and the sea, which he should never revisit. The German, whose side was laid open by a wound, which, for want of dressing, had increased, uttered cries of pain. M. Lanternier continually uttered short exclamations ; his respiration was difficult and compressed, accompanied by a continual rattling in the throat. He lost, for a time, in his delirium, the use of his reason ; and when the fever which preyed upon him became less intense, he only pronounced these words, "O my God !" In the evening, when they served the boiled barley, I opened the door of our room. The feeble light of the lamp of our guard lighted our dungeon, and by this pale and melancholy ray we ranged ourselves around our dish of barley.

I had bought, with the two pieces of money

given me by the Kaït of Mascara, a wooden spoon; we messed together. I shared the use of my spoon with Francesco. When we were satisfied, we carried the dish to each of our sick; for they could not even drag themselves to the middle of the room. Then, during the night, when the wind was high, I went into the court to collect the oranges blown from the branches of the largest tree by the violence of the tempest. I distributed them to the invalids, together with some fruit I had purchased with the remainder of my money; and I used every care, all my endeavours, to repay these unfortunate men for all the kind offices, all the attention they had paid me during the long illness under which I had nearly sunk at Mascara, after the death of Meurice.

It is not rare, indeed, to find here below, in poor and half-ruined dwellings, hunger, cold, sickness, and death. Certainly we meet in towns great grief and dreadful suffering. Whatever form it may assume, death presents itself, pitiless and inflexible, in the camp as in the city, in the desert as in the fields, by the couch of the sick; but still the sufferings and privations to which we were exposed were far more terrible and more severe. There was none to dry our tears. The horseman who finds on the way a man suffering from hunger or cold, offers his gourd, or casts his mantle over his shoulders; in the dungeon, charity, religion, visit the unhappy prisoner. But for us! our enemies were savage; they did not even understand our language; misery and death, which had established themselves in our

narrow prison, drew from them not even a glance; our complaints caused them not even a sigh. I was surrounded by miserable beings, who, almost naked, upon the damp earth, without fire, without food, uttered mournful groans, and I had no means of relieving them, nothing to quench their thirst, nothing to satisfy their hunger, nothing to dress their wounds; nothing, nothing! I could not even whisper these words, so powerful for all in misfortune, so consoling for the afflicted, "Hope, return! country!" — for, at these words, the dying men, with a convulsive movement, raising themselves, and fixing upon my eyes their dull and glassy stare, replied in blasphemies, and exclaimed,

"Are we not then sufficiently unhappy? we have been unworthily deceived. Will you attempt, at the last moments, to nurse a vain security in our minds? Will you place before the graves which await our bodies hope, like a veil, to conceal the mournful spectacle from our view? We are cold; we are hungry. Satisfy the hunger which consumes us; warm our benumbed limbs."

Yes, whatever may be the time and place, even in the greatest misery, the afflicted find some consolation. For us there was none; we had nothing to expect from man, for he had exhausted his cruelty upon us; we had nothing to expect from God, for his name never passed our lips. Sincere and pious prayer, accompanied by faith and resignation, never descended into our prison; she had never united us prostrate at her feet; we had never

seen her, raising her hands to heaven, and imploring, in her pure and consoling voice, the termination of our misery.

Still such an occupation would have produced salutary and useful reflections in our minds. Imagine these twelve men enclosed in a dungeon scarcely large enough to contain them, covered with disease, vermin, and wounds, wasted by famine, brutalized by cold and sufferings, only opening their mouths to pronounce a complaint or a blasphemy; murmurs on their lips, but never resignation. Death unceasingly returned, as the subject of our conversation, and the fear of it caused in our minds an agitation, a disquietude, under which the most robust constitution would, doubtless, have sunk. Since my return, I have made many reflections on all these horrible circumstances; and I derive some consolation from knowing that Francesco and M. Lanternier, before they lost the use of their reason, both sincerely and conscientiously prayed to the Supreme Being.

One morning they erected a canopy before the door of our prison; they spread some beautiful carpets, and soon afterwards we saw the Bey arrive to pay his soldiers. The slaves placed at his feet a large round Morocco skin, covered with small circles of waxed cloth, upon which they emptied several bags of money. The soldiers were in the court, and each in his turn, on being called by his name, came for his pay.

Mahidin-el-Hadj-el-Schir-Ben-Moubarek, Bey of Miliana, is a man of forty years of age; he is

rather taller than Abd-el-Kader, his countenance long; he has small eyes, thick lips, and a beard inclining to grey. The haick and the bernou he wore were blue and red, ornamented with gold and silver tassels, and very beautiful; a magnificent yataghan glittered in his belt. The officers, ranged by his side in a single line, had all breeches and red waistcoats, and red and white bernous. The cushion on which the Bey was seated, of worked silk, and of different colours, testified his luxury and his riches; this personage was surrounded by far greater splendour and wealth than the Sultan.

I thought for a moment the Bey would take some notice of us; but he did not even cast a single glance at our prison. I went out therefore to attract his attention; I held in my hand the letters of General Rapatel: the Bey asked to see the papers. One of his soldiers, André Achmet, a deserter from the Spahis, who spoke French, acted as interpreter. I read my letters, and told him the Sultan had already read them. I explained the dreadful condition in which we had been allowed to remain, since our arrival at Miliana, and pointed out how different the cruel treatment to which he had exposed us, was to the generous intentions of Abd-el-Kader. The Bey promised fairly; he assured me our condition should be improved; he went out, and we obtained no relief; his benevolent protestations were never followed by any result.

About this time we heard of the expedition

against Constantine; rejoicings of every description were celebrated for several days in the town. The Arabs pretended the French had had 4,000 men killed, and had lost 20 pieces of cannon.

In the mean while, the Jew Durand arrived at Miliana; he came to see us, and told me he had been sent by the governor to negociate our exchange. He was going, he said, to Abd-el-Kader, for whom he had letters—he would return in fifteen days, and on his passage he would conduct us to Algiers. The Arabs, on their part, pretended that M. Durand was going to Mascara, to agree with the Sultan upon the terms of a peace the French were anxious to conclude. This intelligence, in addition to the unfortunate result of the expedition against Constantine, caused the Arabs a lively satisfaction; they thought our army reduced to extremity. The journey of M. Durand to Mascara, which would last fifteen days, afflicted us deeply. My companions, already very ill, gave way to the deepest despair. M. Lanternier entirely lost the use of his reason.

I entreated M. Durand to send me a little money, to obtain some relief for our sick.

“If I had thought of finding you,” replied he, “thus unfortunate, I would have brought money with me; but I only carry the sum necessary for the expenses of my journey. I will go and seek some of my own persuasion; I will ask of them some pecuniary assistance, which I will hasten to hand over to you.”

A few hours afterwards, M. Durand sent us

thirty-six loaves of white bread, some fruit, sweet-meats, and raisins. A Jew, a friend of his, brought us an immense teapot, with some cups and sugar. I commenced by pouring out tea for each of our invalids; we then drank the remainder. We never saw M. Durand again; he had kept even the time of his departure secret, and did not send any money. The provisions and the tea sent us from him revived our half-exhausted strength. The importance in which I always saw M. Durand held by the French, the consideration and credit he enjoyed, had given rise to the conviction that he might be of the greatest service to us under such circumstances. Still the reserve he maintained in his discourse, his refusal of pecuniary assistance, when, in our condition, the most trifling sum would have been of the greatest service to us, and have preserved some of us either from disease, which a day longer might become incurable, or from certain death, made me lose the favourable opinion I had entertained of M. Durand. It is impossible to believe, allowing that he had with him only the money necessary for his journey, that he was unable to borrow a trifling sum from the Jews settled at Miliana. In general these negociators are great promisers, and devoted servants to prosperity; address them in adversity, and you will rarely obtain what you seek from their benevolence.

The day after this visit, a Hadjouti came to announce to me that we were about to set out, and proceed to the spot where the exchange was to take place. I did not trust to his words, for I en-

tirely confided in what M. Durand had said to me respecting our return. I thought M. Durand was likely to be better informed as to the intentions of the General and Arab chiefs, than a simple horseman. Moreover, we had been so often deceived by false reports, that I treated with incredulity and distrust all the promises with which we were continually flattered. I was wrong, however, in doubting the positive assurance of deliverance which this Hadjouti gave me, for half-an-hour had scarcely elapsed, when they took the names of those who were to leave Miliana that same day. Madame Laurent, M. Lanternier, Crescenso, Francesco, Benedicto, and I, were directed to leave the prison, and quit Miliana.

M. Lanternier, on learning the hour of our deliverance was about to strike, experienced some relief; the fever decreased; he succeeded in raising his head; but, alas! the unfortunate man was unable to keep his legs, even when supported between two of us. In the mean while, they led out a mule; we succeeded in placing him on the saddle, but he had not sufficient strength to keep his seat, even with assistance. We were obliged to carry him in our arms, and place him in the prison. The weather was dreadful; it was cold, and thick snow never ceased falling. It was imprudent to expose M. Lanternier to the severity of so bad a season; his weakness and illness sufficiently proved the impossibility of his bearing the fatigue of so difficult a journey. A moment of cruel deliberation then succeeded. Ought we

to take M. Lanternier, or leave him ? According to all appearances, his death might happen any moment, and if we carried him a short distance from Miliana, death would close his eyes. We should then have merely a corpse, which we should be compelled to leave on the way, without burial ; and, on the other hand, by leaving him at Miliana, another prisoner might obtain his liberty in his stead.

We consulted together. During the discussion M. Lanternier seemed sunk in complete insensibility. He uttered not a cry, or a complaint. I thought for a moment he was aware of the danger there was in exposing him to such severe weather, and that he had sufficient resignation and strength to see us depart, without giving utterance to his despair and grief in mournful lamentations. M. Pic's servant was the most unwell after M. Lanternier. We decided he should depart instead of him ; for, in spite of the severity of his wound, he was able to scramble on the mule, and hold himself on without our assistance.

We then had to think of separating from our companions in captivity. The prison door, which had just opened for us, was about to close upon them after our departure ; and who could tell or foresee the day when it would again open, and allow them a free passage ?

At the noise of our steps and adieux, M. Lanternier shook off the insensibility in which he had been plunged ; he filled the prison with his heart-rending cries.

“What! you are going to leave me. Oh, it is frightful—you wish my death, then! I am so old and so ill. What have I done to you? This is not what you promised me. My God! and my wife and child! M. France, my wife and child! take me away—I must go—I am old, I tell you—my days are numbered. Abandon the companion of your captivity—him who has been exposed to the severest treatment of you all—leave him behind, when on the way home—an old man, the father of a family? it is infamous. I thought you so good. For pity’s sake take me. I have not many days to live; but I shall, at least, embrace my wife and child before I die. My God, come to my assistance!”

And the other prisoners, their voices choked with sobs, with tears in their eyes, stretching their arms towards me—

“Lieutenant, you are going; do not forget us—you know our misery.”

“Have I not shared all your misfortunes; have I not on my body the marks of suffering to which I have been exposed? Rely on me, I will paint your frightful condition, and use all my efforts to accomplish your deliverance.”

“Yes, yes, Lieutenant, we trust in you: tell the General the unhappy prisoners are exposed to cold and hunger; that they are stretched on the earth, and have no fire. You will speak of us. The days are long here—there they pass quickly; for misfortune counts not the hours. Tell him we are without bread, without fire, without clothing. Tell

him it is very cold in the mountains. Forget not the poor prisoners."

"I must go, too, M. France," exclaimed M. Lanternier.

"We all wish to set out," replied the other prisoners, "Lieutenant. Send us bread, shoes, shirts, cloaks. We shall not die here, shall we? You will think of us on your arrival. You remember M. Meurice died of cold; Berthoumian also died of cold. For pity's sake do not forget us."

And they continued their complaints, their tears, their supplications, until the guard closed the door of their dungeon.

I heard the sighs, the stifled groans, the imprecations, and, above all, and forming a still more mournful contrast, the hiccough and rattling of M. Lanternier, in his last agonies, advanced a few hours by his severe emotion; and it was not without experiencing a contraction of the heart that I passed the threshold of my prison. I left so many unfortunates behind me! My joy at leaving so frightful an abode was very great; but still I did not experience that happiness I had so long hoped for, at the moment I should see the path of return open before me. The sorrows of the prisoners, the scene of desolation, the tears, the entreaties, the despair, had deeply afflicted me. Pensive and mournful, I turned my eyes from that abode of grief. I was about to depart from a town Monsieur Lanternier would never leave. I called to mind the words of the prisoners; and I saw that our transit through the most remarkable places in the land of the Arabs had been marked by the

death of one of our companions. We had left a dead body in the places where we had passed our captivity, like a funeral mark, which indicated the spot where the Christian prisoners had dwelt. The corpse of Berthoumian was interred at Tékédemta—that of Meurice at Mascara.

A few days after our departure, M. Lanternier sunk under his disease, and his remains were buried at the gates of Miliana.

We stopped before the house of the Bey; the door was open. He was seated in his vestibule, upon a bench. He called to me, and recommended me to press General Rapatel to hasten the exchange of the prisoners who remained.

“I wish,” said he, “three Arabs for one Christian; at this price I will leave the advanced posts unmolested for some time. If your Sultan refuses these conditions, the Hadjoutis and myself will never cease attacking your defences.”

“Your menaces,” replied I, “will not influence the General to exchange the prisoners; for as to these threats, he despises them; but as he does not wish the Christians to die in a prison, where they are treated in a horrible and unexampled manner, he will hasten the proposed exchange.”

“I recommend you to carry my words to the General, as I have pronounced them.”

“I promise to do so.”

I then asked André Achmet, who served as an interpreter, to see M. Durand; I wished to borrow some money from him, and send assistance to my companions. I was not able to see him. He was, as I have already said, incognito. Madame Lau-

rent and Benedicto awaited us before the Bey's house. Their condition had been very different from ours. They related to us the kind treatment they had experienced in that hospitable abode.

The Bey has two charming daughters, and whose kindness of heart equals the grace and beauty of their countenances. These two young girls rose in the middle of the night, and brought food to Madame Laurent and Benedicto. They gave them silk 'kerchiefs, which were of great use to them during the journey, and which they wrapped round their heads. Madame Laurent often said to them she had no need of any thing, but doubtless we suffered numerous privations. These excellent women, then, sent us dishes of couscoussou, but the negroes who were directed to bring them to us eat them, with our guards. I have seen one of these young girls; I know not if they have been to Algiers, but they are dressed with taste, elegance and richness. They wear diamond ear-rings and bracelets, and every thing on their persons, as in their dwelling, announces the influence the vicinity of Algiers must necessarily exercise on the town and country around the French advanced posts; like the sun, in the spot where its rays fall, civilization developes in the place where its influence is felt the fruitful seeds of wealth and elegance.

We mounted our mules; Crescenso was obliged to follow on foot, and we passed through the town in the midst of the hootings of the population crowding round our path, and who exclaimed, "*Ah! the dogs of Christians are going.*"

CHAPTER XXI.

MY COMPANIONS IN MISFORTUNE.—MEURICE.—THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF MILIANA.—JOURNEY.—BAD WEATHER.—HALT FOR THE NIGHT.—CRUELTY OF THE ARABS OF THE TRIBES OF MITIDJA.—THE PRAYER OF THE TRUE BELIEVERS.—BENEDICTO.—VEXATION.—PROJECTS OF REVENGE.—THE WOUNDED MAN.—NIGHT.—JOURNEY.—RIVER.—OLIVE GROVE.—PLAIN OF MITIDJA.—MAGNIFICENT PANORAMA.—ARRIVAL AT BLIDA.—WE ARE DRIVEN FROM THE TOWN.—THE TRIBE OF THE BENI-MESSAOUT.—IRONS.—EXPECTATION.—OUR HUT AND ITS INHABITANTS.—DECEPTION.—RETURN TO BLIDA.

WE were on our return home. I had reached at last the termination of my captivity; and this moment, looked forward to with so much impatience, did not excite in us the joy we had anticipated. Misfortune and disease had wasted the strength of Crescenso and Francesco; their warm and lively imagination had been completely destroyed by the ill-treatment and anxiety they had so long endured. They had forgotten the sea, their vessels, Genoa, and their families; they exhausted their little remaining strength in complaints and reproaches; they thought of nothing but the sufferings of the moment; they only saw the fatigue and disease which had lamed their limbs; and grief, rather than joy, occupied all their thoughts.

Benedicto wept; the poor child complained of cold, and never ceased inquiring for the children with whom he used to play in the streets of the

town, and his mother, whom he had, he said, left in the neighbourhood of Mascara. Madame Laurent's health was broken; she had lost all her liveliness, and, like the two fishermen, only appeared sensible to the fatigues of the journey, and the severity of the weather. The servant of M. Pic never spoke of his master, whom he had left in the prison at Miliana; the wound in his side caused him, at times, to utter piercing cries, and he followed our convoy mechanically: at every false step the mule made, which altered his seat on the saddle, his wound caused him acute pain.

I followed sorrowfully the chief of our escort, and shared the general sadness; still I was well enough in health, and in spite of the cold and snow, was able to bear the fatigue of the journey without running too great risk. But how changing is the heart of man! The desires formed in one day, realized the next, are replaced by others as ardent, as unbounded as the first. I was sure of my approaching deliverance, and still my mind was absorbed by painful reflections. I returned without Meurice; the death of this unfortunate man was a deep source of regret.

The ties of blood, the friendship from infancy, have not the same influence over our affections, as intimacy contracted in the midst of misery and misfortune. For several months I had shared Meurice's carpet, upon which we stretched our hunger, disease, and sufferings. We conversed only of our fears, our grief, our hopes, our return to Algiers; we loved each other like brothers, we

anticipated, with such pleasure, our return to France, visiting our families together, and repeating all the kind offices mutually conferred. I returned alone to Algiers; I carried the news of his sufferings and death. I felt a void in my existence. How was I to present myself to his wife, and to his family?

After Meurice, I thought of Berthoumian. This Italian, born under a warm and serene sky, young, robust, inured to fatigue by his labours as fisherman, was buried in the snow of Tékédemta. What fatality had caused him thus to perish? After Tékédemta, after Mascara, spots marked with their tombs, came the name of Miliana. I still heard the supplications, the tears, the grinding of the teeth of the unhappy men we had just left. M. Lanternier returned unceasingly to my recollection. His wife, his daughter, the horrible punishment he had endured at Droma, with the Sultan, at Mascara, presented themselves in lively colours. Poor man! And Mardulin, that faithful and generous servant! As for him, I anticipated a change of fortune, and was in hopes his devotedness would find its recompense.

In the midst of these reflections, we left Miliana by the western gate. In spite of the thick mist which obscured the atmosphere, and the snow which was falling around us, we distinguished, as we descended the mountain, a great number of fruit trees and pretty gardens. We found on our route several basins, some formed by nature, others built of stones, but almost all of them in bad con-

dition. Subterranean aqueducts conducted the water, which was to supply the reservoirs of the surrounding gardens, and for the use of the horses and animals of the town.

We travelled the whole day in the snow, along frightful roads, and over mountains covered with holm oaks, mastic trees, cypresses; and halted for the night, at a tribe situated in the mountains which border the plain of Mitidja, on the west. The country in which we had just arrived seemed well cultivated, and the surrounding fields were covered with stubble.

The chief who commanded our escort, an officer of the Bey of Miliana, conducted us to a hut built of mud, and covered with brambles. They lighted a large fire, and we dried our clothing, upon which the snow had never ceased falling the whole day.

The Arabs of the neighbourhood, on the news of our arrival, came in crowds to visit us. They overwhelmed us with insults and blows. They compelled Benedicto to repeat their prayer: the child astonished them, by the facility with which he expressed himself in their language.

As soon as a fresh comer entered our hut, they made Benedicto recommence. The poor little fellow must, without exaggeration, have repeated the prayer that night two hundred times. The Arabs paid the same attention, and experienced the same pleasure at each repetition. This gave me an idea of the stupidity of the Arabs—some say simplicity—I cannot express otherwise their admiration of so simple a thing. When they thought

proper to allow Benedicto to rest, they began to torment us.

“Repeat the prayer,” said they, addressing me.

“I do not know it.”

“And you?” addressing Francesco.

“I do not know it.”

“The child then is wiser and greater than the men.”

“As it appears, the child is wiser than the men.”

“Dogs of Christians, repeat the prayer!”

“We do not know it.”

“Well, you shall learn it.”

And while they were thus speaking, they kicked and beat us with their sticks.

Then turning towards Crescenso,

“Pray to God and Mahomet.”

Crescenso, to escape their threats and blows, obeyed their wish, and recited the prayer. Francesco and I knew it; for it was impossible, with the worst inclination in the world, to avoid learning it, when we had the pleasure of hearing it recited three times every day and three times every night; but I preferred enduring a few blows to performing an act for the purpose of gratifying these barbarians.

The wounded man, whose sore was inflamed by the fatigue of the journey, was the first subjected to their annoyance. They gave him several kicks, and struck him with their sticks on his wound. The sufferer then started from his lethargy, uttered a piercing cry, and dragged himself to the bottom of the hut. A few moments

afterwards, the Arabs returned to him and tormented him anew.

We suffered a great deal, but did not dare to complain, for the Arabs were only seeking a pretext for falling upon us and killing us on the spot; and on the point of completing our captivity, we endeavoured, by every means, to avoid a subject for a quarrel.

After waiting four hours, they brought us a dish of detestable couscoussou; they refused us the honey and butter which we requested to dress the German's wound. And exposed to the wind and rain, for the mud walls of the hut were half in ruins, we stretched ourselves on the earth, and sought in sleep the forgetfulness of our sufferings.

I was not able to sleep, being so tormented by my anxiety to recover my liberty. At the recollection of the barbarous treatment with which we had been annoyed the whole evening, with a rage and pertinacity nothing can exceed, I promised myself, in the first feeling of anger, on my arrival at Marseilles, to go with Francesco and Crescenso and visit the Arab prisoners lodged in that town, and return with interest the insults and blows we had received during our captivity, and even on the evening before our return to Algiers.

"Francesco, we must revenge ourselves on the Bedouins at Marseilles."

"Yes, yes, Lieutenant; these thieves have half killed me."

"Bedouins, Lieutenant! but they are not men. We are making famous resolves; but I fear we

shall never see them realized, for we shall not be exchanged. The Bedouins will take care we shall never be able to pursue our journey; and we shall die here, like poor Berthoumian."

"You are greatly changed, Francesco. Courage, resolution! We shall sleep to-morrow at Boufarick—to-morrow we shall be free. My good fellow, do not torment yourself any longer—sleep. To-morrow good fortune will sit on the backs of our mules."

"I wish it as sincerely as you; but I still dread the treason and deceit of these brigands. Who knows what may happen to-morrow?"

"To-morrow we shall sleep at Algiers, and will eat macaroni for our supper."

"Speak not thus, Lieutenant; you will kill me."

"I repeat it—to-morrow we shall be at Algiers. We have reached the mountain which borders the plain of Mitidja."

"I shall see Algiers again! I shall see the sea and my ship! How, I shall sail then to Genoa? Oh, my God! I cannot believe in such happiness. But Berthoumian is dead!"

"Those who are dead are dead; let us mourn their fate; but in order to escape a similar destiny, let us not allow ourselves to give way to fear and terror. To-morrow our sufferings will be merely a recollection. Good bye till to-morrow."

"Till to-morrow; good night, lieutenant."

Before day-break next morning we left this tribe, which had given us so unfavourable a reception, and started without breakfasting, on account of the

Rhamadan. We passed for three hours through an olive-grove, intersected in every direction by a river, having a rapid current, but not deep, which we crossed fifteen or twenty times; and by eleven o'clock we reached the plain of Mitidja.

At this moment our guide stopped, and pointed out in the horizon the direction in which Algiers was situated. At this sight our hearts beat with hope and joy. The French settlements were before us; a few hours' march and we should be free. A vast and brilliant panorama unrolled itself at our feet.

Before us the plain of Mitidja, so rich and fertile, stretched itself out, covered with thick pasturage and magnificent fields. In the distance, the outline of Algiers rose like an undefined shadow, which we followed with our eyes and our wishes; on our left the tomb of the Christian, and the mountain of Coleath, bounded the view. On our right, the Atlas, like a barrier between barbarism and civilization, raised its lofty and bare head to the skies. The plain of Mitidja lay at this giant's feet, like a mantle he had thrown from his shoulders, and covered with its green and fertile hue an immense extent of territory. At last, Blida, the Eden of this part of the world, with its elegant minarets, its white towers, its gardens and its trees, its orange trees, covered with fruit, and produced by a rich and powerful vegetation, resembling an immense imperial palace, was coquetishly placed at the foot of the mountain, the

summit of which protected it against the fury of the storms.

Nevertheless, fatigue and sickness had exhausted our strength. Crescenso could walk no longer; Francesco complained, and Benedicto cried from cold. The sight of Algiers had revived my courage. I gave my mule to Crescenso, my haïck to Francesco, and I cried out in all the intoxication of joy—"I will make the remainder of the journey on foot."

We crossed the plain of Mitidja; it was covered with water, and, in some places, up to the knees. My slippers were in a very bad state; I left them in the mud, and was obliged to continue my journey with naked feet. The weather was very bad; the herds were in the tents. The plain presents the appearance of pasture land; the borders are better cultivated. The tribes for the most part are situated at the foot of the lesser Atlas.

At last, after two hours' march in the mud, and over dreadful roads, we arrived at Blida by one o'clock. Our chief made us halt in an open space, at the gates of the town. He proceeded to find the Hakem (Governor named by the French). He soon returned; the Hakem was absent; he had gone to Boufarick to learn if the Arab prisoners had arrived for whom we were to be exchanged. He ordered us to enter the town, but the inhabitants opposed it obstinately, and with inconceivable fury.

We were seated on the earth; women, men,

children, spat upon us, and overwhelmed us with insults and blows. They reproached us with the burning of their gardens by our troops on their last expedition. They made us pay, with interest, for their few scorched trees, and we expected every instant to be strangled by the enraged populace. And, moreover, it was raining; we were stretched on the ground, without protection, exposed to the severity of the season, covered with mud, exhausted with fatigue, suffering from hunger and acute pain. The sight of so many unfortunates groaning at their feet, instead of affecting the Arabs, increased their fury. At last, our chief took pity on us. He conducted us to an olive grove, about ten minutes' walk from the town, and we waited there for the Hakem of Blida for two hours. At last an Arab came to tell us the Hakem would not arrive until late, and that the Kaït of the Hadjoutis ordered us to pass the night with a tribe of the Atlas.

The Arabs of the town came again around us, and began to illtreat us. We suffered cruel anguish. These continual disappointments, these hopes overthrown every moment, made us despair. Francesco cast a glance towards me, in which was expressed the deepest discouragement and despair. He seemed to say to me, "You see; are we not destined to die? By a refinement of cruelty our torturers raise the corner of the veil which conceals from our sight the end towards which all our wishes, all our desires tend. The hope they have cast at intervals in our hearts resembles

a spark, intended to revive the nearly extinguished light of life ; and when our eyes begin to gleam once more, our strength returns, and we are again enabled to stretch forth our arms towards our country, and walk, they retract their pledged word, they break the last link which bound our existence to that of our countrymen, who have been so long expecting us. We shall never revisit Algiers ; we shall die here."

Benedicto also wept ; he complained of cold and hunger, and wished to join the children of the town. At last our chief ordered us to rise, and start immediately. They brought one mule ; it was only after urgent entreaties that we obtained two mules, the one for Madame Laurent, the other for the wounded German, who was obliged also to take Benedicto behind him. We set off from Blida.

I was very much fatigued, but sustained by the hope of recovering my freedom, I walked with ardour, although my feet were bare. Crescenso and Francesco again sank into despondency. The cold affected them severely, and it was with great difficulty they were able to follow us. The Arab who guarded us was on horseback, and he never ceased striking the mules ; for we had to hasten, as he said, to pass the bad roads of the Atlas before the night. After a march, during which we had been exposed to the brutality of our guard, to all the difficulties of a rough and miry road, and to all the severity of the weather, we arrived at nightfall at a tribe of the Beni-Massaout, situated about half-way up the pass of the Atlas which leads to Médeath,

at the spot where the snow which falls during the winter remains a part of the year, and spreads itself in a frozen crust over the ridge of the Atlas.

The Arab's first care was to place me in irons. I in vain protested my firm resolution not to attempt to escape; I in vain pointed to my bruised limbs and torn feet to show the impossibility of escape; the Arab was as deaf to my reasoning as to my entreaties. The Kaït of the Hadjouti had ordered him to take this precaution with me alone. At the sight of the iron which bound my feet, Francesco sunk into deep despair, and exclaimed, "You see, Lieutenant, we shall not be exchanged. They wish us to die here; for if they wished to restore us to liberty, they would not have driven us from Blida."

The chief of our tent lighted a large fire, and upon the assurance we should set out early next morning, I sought to forget my irons. While we were waiting for the bean couscoussou the women were preparing, they gave us some acorn flour and boiled potatoes, round and very small.

I passed a miserable night. At day-break I begged to set out. The Arab told me to wait. He unfastened my irons. Francesco was incessantly repeating we were destined to perish in this tribe of cold and hunger; but I did not give way to these mournful presentiments. I was convinced they would conduct us to Blida; for a young and and pretty woman, with small feet, delicate hands, and slender form, was that moment saddling a horse.

The Arab mounted this horse, and started with-

out allowing us to follow him, saying he was going to Blida, to see if the Hakem had returned, and that he would soon send for us.

The day rolled on in vain expectation; the Arab did not return. I was sent with Crescenso to collect firewood. On my return I entreated the women to give me a little honey, or butter, to dress the German's wound, but was refused.

The mud hut in which we were was inhabited by two men (one of whom appeared to be the father of the other), by three women, and several small children. The room was divided by a grating; on one side was the stable, which contained a horse, a mare and her foal, two cows and two calves (the owner possessed also another hut, which contained four oxen). We occupied the other half, between this last apartment and the wall; three enormous jars, containing dried vegetables, formed a kind of division, and contrived a third corner, in which slept the women and children.

Thanks to the wood we had collected, we had a good fire during the night. I did not sleep, I was still in irons. We passed a part of the following day in the most painful anxiety; we did not depart; the sick became disconsolate, and we had nothing to dress the German's wound.

Towards one o'clock, the chief of the hut announced to us we were about to depart, and that we should proceed directly to Boufarick. We were six in number, and there was but one mule; Crescenso could scarcely walk, the other prisoners could not keep their legs.

The Arabs, far from attempting to extricate us from this dilemma, struck us, and wished to compel us to walk. Madame Laurent mounted the mule, Benedicto placed himself behind her, we procured an ass for the wounded man, and set out. We had scarcely proceeded half a league, along frightful roads, and steep descents, when the German fell from his ass; Francesco could advance no farther; Madame Laurent nearly rolled down a precipice. We halted, and declared we could not proceed. The wind blew with violence, and the snow fell in large flakes. I exhorted these poor people not to be cast down; I pictured to them our return to Algiers: they did not reply. An Arab, while we were resting ourselves, went to a neighbouring tribe and brought back with him a horse; we abandoned the ass, and, after having lifted the German on the horse, and replaced Madame Laurent on her mule, we pursued our journey, obliged, nevertheless, to rest ourselves every quarter of an hour. The Arab had taken Benedicto upon his horse. We arrived at Blida at last, exhausted with fatigue and wet to the skin.

Instead of pursuing our journey to Boufarick, the Arab who conducted us made us halt. It caused us severe mortification, after so many promises, to be compelled to enter Blida after our chief, from whence we had been repulsed with so much harshness two days previous. Another hope destroyed! Another illusion broken! Francesco cried with rage.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE HAKEM OF BLIDA.—GENEROUS HOSPITALITY.—CARE BESTOWED ON THE SICK.—REPROACHES.—EXCELLENT SUPPER.—CONVERSATION.—THE MARABOUT OF THE BENI-KELIL.—THE MARABOUT OF THE OXERROIS.—THE KAIT BERKASSENN, COMMANDANT OF THE HADJOUTIS.—EVENING.—THREATS.—THE KAIT BERKASSENN TRIES TO PERSUADE ME TO REMAIN WITH THE ARABS.—PROMISES.—REFUSAL.—KINDNESS OF THE HAKEM.—DEPARTURE.—ARRIVAL AT BOUFARICK.—THE CAPTAIN GASTU.—THE COMMANDANT OF ERLONG.—JOY.—RECEPTION.—DEPARTURE.—ALGIERS.—MY COMPANIONS IN CAPTIVITY.—RETURN OF MARDULIN TO ALGIERS.—BENEDICTO AND HIS MOTHER.

WE passed through the town of Blida, followed by all the children, who, with insults and threats, cast mud upon our clothing. We were conducted to the quarter inhabited by the Kaït, who had, at last, returned from Boufarick. They introduced us into the house, and we found him seated upon a bench, ranged along the wall of the corridor, which divided the house into two equal parts. The marabouts and the chiefs of the neighbouring tribes, whom the report of our arrival had drawn to Blida, were seated by his side. From thence we passed into a room, where we threw ourselves on the carpets, round a large earthen pan filled with fire. We had some bread and fruit to allay our hunger, and were at last able to take some

repose, without being subjected to any annoyances, and warm our limbs benumbed by the cold. Madame Laurent and Benedicto left us a moment afterwards, and were lodged in the house in which dwelt the wives of the Hakem.

As soon as we were a little recovered, we thought of the poor German. I had some honey and butter brought, and dressed his wound; instead of cicatrising, the sore it had formed extended more and more over his side; still he did not complain.

After this attention paid to Monsieur Pic's servant, I proceeded to rub Francesco. The cold had seized all the extremities of his body, and we had to guard against a worse attack. The fire, the food they had served us, the kindness with which we had been received in this abode, calmed the irritation of Francesco, and he only uttered occasional groans. Crescenso washed his bleeding feet, and rolled himself in a carpet to dry his clothes, wet through by the mud, snow, and rain.

In the meanwhile, the fur-merchant of Blida, who had made the journey with us from Mascara to Miliana, came to tell me the Hakem wished to speak with me.

As soon as I presented myself before him, I said to him—

“What orders have you then given? On our arrival from Miliana, after a long and painful journey, covered with rags and disease, we are stopped at the gates of the town you govern, and the inhabitants have overwhelmed us with insults

and blows, and have mercilessly driven us away."

"I was not at that time in Blida."

"Do the inhabitants of Blida not recognise your authority in your absence, and despise your orders?"

"I had gone to Boufarick."

"You do not answer my question. After a long delay, during which we were exposed to all kinds of annoyances, they led us to a tribe of the mountains, to the Béni-Messaout. There I was put in irons. I do not understand how a Hakem, who calls himself the Christian's friend, since you obtain the authority you enjoy from their hands, can tolerate such cruelty towards French prisoners."

"Here is the man," replied he, pointing to the Kaït of the Hadjoutis, "here is the man who ordered that you should be put in irons for fear of escape."

"I thank you," said I, addressing the Kaït, "for the precaution you have taken with respect to me."

The Kaït did not reply.

The conversation began upon the power and projects of the Sultan, and upon the Governor of the French possessions in Africa. During this discourse, I remarked how distrustfully the Hakem expressed himself, and dreaded to express his thoughts openly before so numerous an auditory. Still, he several times renewed the assurance of the friendship he entertained for the Christians, adding, he had been to Boufarick to see the commandant of the Spahis, and that we should next day proceed to that town to join him.

I returned to our room and communicated this happy intelligence to my companions.

The night had approached, and as it was the Rhamadan, the supper-hour had sounded ; meanwhile a chaou came to call me, and conducted me again to the apartments where the Hakem expected me. He was seated on a divan, covered with rich silk cushions. On his right was a marabout of the tribe of the Béni-Kélil, subject to the French, who had accompanied the Jew, Durand, to Miliana (I have never been able to learn the object of his mission). On the left of the Hakem the marabout of the Oxerrois, the most powerful of the Hadjoutis, and the Kaït Berkassenn, commandant of the Hadjoutis, had taken their seats on the cushions. Rich and sumptuous carpets covered the ground. I seated myself opposite the Hakem, and the chaou who had brought me placed himself by my side.

The room was heated by a large fire.

The Hakem invited me to partake of his repast. A negro immediately brought a tray, which he placed at the feet of our host ; there were several dishes on the tray ; fowls, macaroni, hashed meat, but cooked in moulds, which gave it the form of little fish, formed altogether a most tempting sight. I entreated the Hakem not to forget my companions in misfortune, who were sick, and to send them some refreshment, principally oranges ; for the poor fellows, on seeing the orange trees which surrounded Blida, had expressed a desire to eat some of the fruit. The Hakem replied, he

would send them some couscoussou, some fruit, some bread, some oranges, and that they should be in want of nothing. I could have wished to have taken some macaroni to Francesco, but he was ill, and I dreaded an indigestion might aggravate the disease.

When the slaves had carried away the dishes I have just mentioned, they replaced them by a mess of couscoussou which I found delicious. I then found that a dish of couscoussou, properly cooked, was an excellent meal; I had never eaten any so good before. The Sultan's kitchen was far from equalling that of the Hakem.

After the repast they brought each of the guests pipes and coffee, and we passed the evening in smoking, drinking coffee, and eating fritters with honey, similar to those we had eaten before, at the pastrycook's in Mascara. During the whole repast the Hakem never ceased telling me he was a friend of the Christians.

"But you are also the friend of the Hadjoutes, with whom we are constantly at war," replied I.

"I am, it is true, the friend of the Hadjoutes, but I cannot break with them without serious inconvenience. Nevertheless, the Arabs reproach my fidelity and my attachment to the French, for they call me dog of a Christian."

"Yes," exclaimed the savage Kaït of the Hadjoutes. "There are, in this assembly, three dogs of Christians, the Hakem of Blida, the marabout of the tribe of Ben-Kélil, and the prisoner. Among them are two of the faithful, two good Mussulmans,

the marabout of the Oxerrois and me, the Kaït of the Hadjoutes."

This vehement apostrophe excited the laughter of the Hakem, and this was his only reply. Although the tribe of the Béni-Kélil has submitted to the French, the marabout of that tribe can venture without fear among the Arabs, however cruel and violent the enemy may be among whom he is travelling; he is threatened by no danger, for his title of *hadj* commands the respect and veneration of the true believers.

At one o'clock at night, they served a fresh dish of couscoussou, but none of us eat any. The Hakem said to me with a smile, as he retired,

"You will remain here: guard against those two Hadjoutes, who are also going to sleep in this room."

I had remarked, on entering the room, a sabre and pistols. When the Hakem had retired, my eyes fell unintentionally upon these arms; they were near me, and the Kaït perceived they had attracted my attention. Whether he dreaded some treachery, or from some other motive of which I am ignorant, as soon as the slave had distributed to each of us the carpets and cushions necessary for the night, he ordered him by a sign to give him his arms; the slave obeyed. The Kaït showed them to me, and said,

"This sabre and these pistols, on occasion, may serve against a dog of a Christian like thee."

These menaces did not cause me any dread, for I was the Hakem's guest, and the man who has

this title is sacred to every Arab, as long as he dwells under the roof he has selected for an asylum.

The Kaït placed his arms upon his cushion, I rolled myself in my carpet, and had scarcely laid my head on my pillow, when I fell profoundly asleep.

I was awakened a few moments afterwards by the Kaït; he was seated near me, and said,

“Remain with me; I have beautiful arms; my women are still more beautiful; I have beautiful horses, guns, sabres, yataghans, pistols, powder, a great deal of powder. Remain with me.”

“No; to-morrow I return to Algiers. Let me sleep.”

“Come with me. Amongst the Hadjoutes a bold man obtains all he desires; you will have strong and active horses; you will have beautiful women, you may repose near them, upon rich carpets, under a magnificent tent. They will give you haïcks and bernous, manufactured at Kaala; they will bring you beautiful arms, yataghans, ornamented with pearl and coral, bright guns, well tempered swords, excellent pistols. Come to the Hadjoutes!”

“No; to-morrow I return to Algiers. Let me sleep.”

“You will have powder, a great deal of powder. Your greatness and power will be equal to mine. Follow me; the women call you; the horse awaits you; the arms are hung on the pillars of the tent; rust has not yet touched them. Come to the Had-

joutes ! To the Hadjoutes ! You will be great ; you will fire numerous shots ; you will be always in the saddle, and you will be constantly at war."

"The Sultan has already proposed to me to remain in his camp ; his offers were as brilliant and as magnificent as yours—I refused them—I refuse again to day. I wish neither power nor command with Abd-el-Kader, or among the Hadjoutes."

"It is still time to change your mind ; man is imprudent, and often repents having refused the proposals offered by a friend ; but then it is too late."

"You know not, then, that the riches, the power you have at your command, and of which you boast so much, are only miserable trifles, which even the meanest Christian would not accept without exposing himself to severe disappointment.

"What are then these Hadjoutes of whom you tell me ? You say, you know how to appreciate true greatness, courage, and daring ; and did not Moussa, the Christian deserter, hold one of the most distinguished posts in your ranks ?"

"Moussa is a coward and a liar ; he never had among us the power and the importance he boasts of. Moussa fled from the enemy, has robbed the Sultan, he has committed other crimes, and I expect, by this time, he has ceased to live.

"Remain with us ; you are a brave man, a courageous soldier ; you will be soon recompensed ; you know not the glory and grandeur which awaits you ; your fortune will be rapid ; you will have

horses, arms, powder, women. To the Hadjoutes !
To the Hadjoutes !”

“No ! Good night, let me sleep.”

Every half hour the slaves brought coffee ; the Kaït never ceased the whole night exhorting me to remain among the Arabs ; the day appeared, and he fell asleep. As for me, I expected the Hakem with impatience ; he had promised to come at an early hour ; at last, at eight o'clock, he made his appearance.

“I hope,” said he, addressing me, “you will speak to the Governor of the manner in which I have received you. Are you satisfied with your host ?”

“Very well satisfied.”

“Tell the Governor I treat thus all the Christians who arrive at Blida. Ask him to give me pay ; my resources are limited, and I shall require his assistance.”

“When I shall have seen my companions, and have heard from them if they have been well attended to, I promise you, if their answer is such as I hope, to tell the Governor what you have requested me to ask him.”

“Do not forget it ; for I have a great expenditure, and have no money.”

“I promise to carry your words to him.”

I rejoined our invalids : they were satisfied, and had passed a good night. Three mules waited before the door. Madame Laurent, the German, Francesco, with Benedicto, mounted their steeds ; Crescenso and I proceeded on foot. The Hakem gave me an old pair of slippers.

This last journey was as laborious as could be. The rain fell in torrents; Benedicto was cold and cried; I suffered severely also. But how could I complain, when our advanced posts and Boufarick were visible before us? We passed the first guard-house. The Captain alone, on account of the bad weather, came to see us pass. I squeezed his hand with a feeling of inexpressible joy. We marched on, and reached Boufarick.

We passed across the market—we penetrated into the interior of the camp;—and, full of happiness, the intoxication of joy, I threw myself into the arms of Captain Gastu, Lieutenant of the Aga of the Spahis, who had brought from Algiers the Arab prisoners in payment of our ransom.

My pen here refuses to describe the joy, the pleasure, the satisfaction I experienced, after so many horrible sufferings. There are feelings we cannot express as strongly as we feel. I cast my arms round the necks of all the officers who drew near me.

While they were carrying my companions to the canteens, where they hastened to render them every assistance, Captain Gastu conducted me to M. D'Erlong, Commandant of the Spahis. This noble and generous officer had had the attention to retard the hour of his breakfast, in order to invite me to partake of it. After the first moments of greeting, we seated ourselves at table. Whilst I was eating, the servants washed my feet, the officers of the Spahis and of the artillery came to see me, and each brought me clothing to replace the rags I had on my body.

Will these worthy and generous officers permit me to express in how lively a manner I felt the care and attention they never ceased lavishing upon me, on my arrival at Boufarick? They were the first, with the Commandant D'Erlong, and Captain Gastu, to console the prisoner—the first to tear from my body the livery of misery which had so long covered me. It is impossible for me to paint all my joy, all my gratitude, for the affectionate reception. Your heart, better than my pen, will tell you the happiness I must have felt on finding myself the object of such generous solicitude.

I had cast off my rags! I had embraced my brethren in arms! I had returned to my own nation! An officer had the kindness to lend me a horse. Francesco and Crescenso were too weak; they carried them to the hospital. Madame Laurent, Benedicto, and I, set off with an escort of thirty men, commanded by Captain Gastu, and by nine o'clock at night we reached Algiers.

Shall I prolong my tale? No. After so hard a captivity, every thing is beautiful, every thing good. Shall I tell you I fell ill?—that I received visits from officers of every department at Algiers?—from M. Lafont every kind of service and assistance? But you well know that, with us, generosity and benevolence are always ready to fly to the assistance of an unfortunate fellow being. I may express every thing I could say in one word—I was free!

* * * *

The Hakem of Blida had led away the Arab prisoners. Their dress and countenances formed a striking contrast with our rags and pale faces, worn out, as we were, with fatigue, hunger, and disease.

Francesco, Madame Laurent, the German, and Crescenso, entered the hospital at Algiers; their illness, without causing serious fear, nevertheless required great care and management. Berthoumian had died at Tékêdemta; Meurice at Mascara; M. Lanternier at Miliana. His wife and daughter, with the two German women, are, at this moment, with the Emperor of Morocco, to whom Abd-el-Kader had sent them as a present. Benedicto and I alone were able to move about. The other prisoners have been restored to liberty.

At Algiers I had obtained Mardulin's pardon, and I wrote to him the letter as agreed. This good and devoted servant had fled from Mascara with the orange merchants of Blida. One day, as he was leading horses to water in the neighbourhood of that town, he perceived a detachment of Spahis in the plain. He ran towards them, found an asylum in their ranks, and returned with them to Boufarick. They sent him to Oran, where he has been enrolled in a corps of Spahis. May this brave and generous soldier, to whom so many unfortunate Christians owe their lives, by his good conduct, merit the esteem of his officers, and obtain a post which will secure him from want for the rest of his days!

At the moment I was on the point of embarking

for France, I heard a voice which called to me from the quay, "Good day, M. France." I turned round, and perceived Benedicto, dressed in new clothes.

"Good day, Benedicto; are you glad of your return to Algiers?"

"Oh yes, Sir! I am very glad."

"Where is your mother?"

"My mother?" replied he, smiling, "my mother? she is waiting for me over there. It was she who sent me these fine clothes. I am going to embark with Francesco and Crescenso to see her."

And while pronouncing these words, "She is waiting for me over there," the child no longer pointed to the tents of the Arabs, but turned to the shores of the Mediterranean, the waves of which rolled on to wash the coasts of Genoa, upon which is situated the village in which his mother dwells.

OBSERVATIONS.

THE ARABS.—MANNERS.—CUSTOMS.—CHARACTER.—ARAB WOMEN.—
THEIR LIFE.—CONDITION.—DISEASES.—HOSPITALITY.—ANIMALS.—
—THE HORSE.—THE CAMEL.—THE MULE.—THE ASS.—THE OX.—
SHEEP—GOATS.—AGRICULTURE.—TEMPERATURE.

THERE are numerous observations and details, which it is impossible to introduce into the middle of a narrative, as we run the risk of interrupting the recital, and scattering without fruit, in the flow of our narration, occurrences and remarks which, separate are of no value or interest; and which, if wisely arranged, and properly introduced, as to time and place, might lead to useful and important conclusions.

I have therefore reserved until the conclusion of the history of my captivity, the observations I have collected during my stay among the Arabs. I have not entered intimately into a description of their life, except during the time I remained in Abd-el-Kader's camp; for the remainder of the time I passed in the prisons of Mascara and Miliana. I shall also pass over all the facts which I am not able to substantiate from having been witness of, and shall content myself in mentioning those in which I have been interested.

Thus the reader must not expect to read a regular dissertation on the manners and customs of the Arabs, preceded by moral and political remarks; nor yet a discourse supported by texts and citations taken from the ancient authors, and from the monuments of Roman, Arabic, Moorish, and Spanish archæology. It is a task I leave to others. It is easy to erect systems by our fireside, and make a display of the extent of a fanciful erudition. The man of action relates what he has seen and heard, and leaves his work incomplete rather than attempt to complete it by giving reality a rude check, and truth the lie.

Moreover, in truth, instruction is now so general. Why then, turn over, for no purpose, the Roman annals, and present to the nineteenth century, as models to follow, the trials and systems which the people of antiquity made in their distant expeditions, and in the government of their colonies. I am certainly far from disputing the power of the Roman empire; I can even recite, if necessary, the famous reflection of Virgil,

“*Tantæ molis erat Romanam condere gentem;*”

but, in my opinion, the different forms of society which have gradually succeeded the Roman empire, for nineteen centuries, have made immense progress in every direction, and in every path open to human activity; and that we ought to find, in ourselves, sufficient strength and power to accomplish and succeed in the great labours which we have undertaken. When a single nation ruled the earth, when

its voice governed the universe, and its sword forced it to bow the head, under pain of extermination, the human race was weak. Education, the liberation of the slave, religion, had not as yet taught man all his dignity, all his importance; it was an easy thing to govern him. The times are changed. Ancient Rome, with its senate, its consuls, its generals, sleeps the sleep of death. Have not our savage and rude forefathers dug the tomb, and carried to the grave, that sovereign of the ancient world; and have they not, after having placed their victorious seal upon her bier, seated their families and their God in the countries where she had exercised, for centuries, her despotic authority?

I avoid, then, any reflections belonging to the domain of historical and archæological science. I believe in the worth of the men of our days. I have more confidence in their enlightenment, in their knowledge of every description, in their experience, than in that of a Scipio; and this doctrine presents a more noble, more generous, more becoming aspect, than that which consists in lessening men and events of our age to increase the importance of the men and events of antiquity.

THE ARAB.

From the age of four or five years, the Arab children are mounted on horseback, and guard the flocks. They have charge of the foals. Thus the first care of their parents is to favour the development of their constitution, and to strengthen it by

severe exercises, and employment which exposes them to the severities of the season.

When they have acquired sufficient strength to handle a gun, without having reached a fixed age, these children enter the class of men, and have no other employment than tilling the earth and making war.

The chief distinctive marks of the Arab character are his tastes; his inclinations urge him to assume the profession of arms rather than apply himself to any other employment. His life is passed in one long hostility; a perpetual strife. Ambuscades, assaults, marches, battles, these are the first pictures which present themselves to the eyes of the child, and the emotions which this adventurous, noisy, and animated spectacle sows in his young heart, are too lively, too powerful, to be ever effaced.

The Arab is generally tall, and his dress greatly assists in increasing the proportions of his figure. His complexion is pale and copper coloured; his limbs are lean, long, and nervous.

He shaves his head, but wears a moustache and beard. In spite of the vapour baths he takes when in the towns, and the bathing in the river, he is dirty and covered with lice. But he is so accustomed to the vermin, which spread themselves over his body and dress, that he never appears incommoded by them, nor attempts to rid himself of them.

The Arabs never spit in the fire.

In every place where there are carpets, such as in houses and tents, they put off their slippers

before entering, and walk with bare feet over the carpets.

They never smoke in the presence of the holy marabouts—the Hadji. These pious personages must never smoke, and they are ordered not to appear in a spot where smokers are assembled.

The Arabs are very affectionate among themselves, and very particular in their testimony of friendship. Every time they meet they salute each other with many tokens of regard.

Equals touch their hands, withdraw them, and reciprocally carry them to their mouths.

The superior offers his hand to the inferior to kiss, and the latter attempts to embrace it, but the superior quickly withdraws it, and if the inferior has not been able to retain the hand, he contents himself with clasping his own.

If he is a marabout, the Arab first attempts to kiss his hand, then to clasp the lappets of his haick. The marabout always pretends to embrace one of the lappets of his haick.

The Arab of the desert leads a wandering life. He carries his tent according to his caprice, or the wants of those who surround him, to the spot he thinks most suitable for fixing his temporary abode; and he leads a wild and rude existence in the midst of an uncultivated and uninhabited desert, taking with him his wives, his children, his horses, his camels, and his flocks.

The Arabs of the coast live in fixed tents, and occupy certain portions of land. These lands are owned by those who work them, as they think fit;

and cannot become the property of a new comer without agreement and purchase. The Arabs of the first range of the mountains of the Atlas, in the regions where the cold is severe, dwell in huts built of mud, and possess, like those on the coast, a certain determinate quantity of land.

The greatest part of the inhabitants of the towns are Moors, and a few Couloughlis ; the remainder of the population, with the exception of a few Arabs, is composed of Jews.

The Jewish people are to be found in all quarters of the globe ; the families of that nation, scattered over all the earth, have religiously preserved the manners and customs of their forefathers. It is a sublime monument raised to the memory of a man, the fidelity the Jews have always preserved in the observance of the laws which Moses gave their forefathers on their departure from Egypt.

The Greek and Roman legislators have been talked of. Where are the gods of Greece or Rome ? Where are the sons of the pagans ? It is true, as the rhetoricians say, the gods of Homer have felt themselves eclipsed by our prosaic minds, and retreated to Olympus. But their temples still remain, and the descendants of these great nations have forgotten their language and religion in slavery. The temples are still existing, but the edifices are silent ; the temple of Jerusalem is overthrown ; the capital of Judaism is occupied by the Turks, and for two thousand years this nation, dispersed among all the people of the earth, condemned from their birth to labour, contempt, vexations, misery, has

come down to our days with its laws, its customs, its God, and its religion. This race has never mixed with other people; it has never degenerated, and the children of Israel have preserved the features, the blood of their forefathers. Moses lives still in them in flesh and blood. These people—who speak their maternal tongue, who confess Jehovah, who wait without tiring the promise of their prophets, who form a single and immense family, of which the members are ever ready to fly to the assistance of a brother in distress—do they not present a beautiful, a magnificent spectacle; and over this mass, which has no value or weight but by a single word, Jehovah, must we not admire Moses, the most beautiful, the sublimest character of ancient times? Moses—whose will was sufficiently strong, whose life was powerful enough to form, to organise, and give existence to a nation, which for three thousand years, through the fall of the most flourishing empires, continues active, industrious, economical, and resigned; at one time poor as the most miserable beggar, and again richer and more opulent than the most powerful monarchs?

The condition of the Jews among the Arabs is similar to that they lead among other people. Besides, I have said enough respecting this people during my captivity at Miliana.

The wandering Arab considers himself greater, more noble than the citizen, whom he heartily despises. Thus the Sultan, Abd-el-Kader, tries, on every occasion, and by every possible means, to bring back the manners and the life of the Arabs

of the desert. Has not the prophet cast the seed of the divine word among these people, as unsettled and as simple as the patriarchial tribes?

The Arabs are very courageous when they have to attempt a *coup-de-main*; their impetuosity in the attack is unequalled. Like actors, who, in order to make a greater impression upon the minds of their audience, exaggerate their declamation and their attitudes, these barbarians flourish their sabres and their guns, wave their bernous, and charge upon their enemies with a savage outcry. They defy their adversaries from a distance by voice and gesture, like the heroes of Homer.

According to the circumstances of the time and place, the Arab can be sober, frugal, of uncommon activity, or gluttonous and of unequalled drowsiness. He sets out for war, he takes only a little acorn flour in a corner of his haick, and behold him, day and night, coursing on his horse over the plains and mountains, enduring hunger, heat, cold, want of rest, and every species of danger and privation.

On return from his expedition he will sleep, or remain in a drowsy state for whole days, and will eat with voracity. If he enters a tent, and the inhabitants are engaged in taking their repast, without being invited, he will tear with his fingers a morsel of the meat and devour it.

The Arabs are much attached to their children, and never cease caressing them.

Their greatest pleasure, the amusement they most delight in, is burning powder. Thus, every

time they have attempted to persuade me to remain with them, in the enumeration of the wealth which awaited me, and the delights reserved for me, they always repeated, "Powder! much powder!"

The Arabs are greedy, thieves, deceivers, and liars. Those who surround Abd-el-Kader, and the Moors of the towns, are very strict in the observance of the duties and ceremonies their religion imposes on them. They pray six times in the twenty-four hours, and, while repeating their prayers, always turn towards the east.

The wandering tribes are far from being as devout and pious; I even suspect they are very indifferent in this respect. The greater part commit acts, which the true believer considers as impious; and some of them, when the eyes of their chiefs are not upon them, are addicted to practices quite contrary to the spirit of the Koran.

Ben-Faka for example, never fulfilled his devotions, except when the presence of the Marabout, who visited our tent, compelled him; and, to pay his court to Abd-el-Kader, he sometimes went, at the hour of prayer, to the Sultan's tent, to repeat his.

On my arrival at Marseilles, I hastened to visit the Arab prisoners. I intended to make them expiate, in some measure, the cruelties I had endured among their brethren; my hostile disposition was soon changed to a kindly feeling. I related to them my misfortune and misery, and I saw with pleasure the humane manner in which

these unfortunate men were treated. They were well lodged, well fed, well clothed; they had also pay allowed them, with which they bought coffee and tobacco; but, generally, they gave them the tobacco and coffee they demanded.

They had also, in the theatre at Marseilles, placed two seats at their disposal every night. They go there in turns, and it is not one of their least agreeable amusements. They have often mentioned it to me with delight and admiration.

Mussulmans at a theatre !

I invited two of these Arabs to dinner. One of them was a marabout, and on account of the Rhamadan, he would not partake of my repast; the other accepted my invitation, and drank to me in brandy like a sailor. He was delighted with my conduct towards him. He immediately wrote to Abd-el-Kader to inform him of my generosity, and when he had finished his letter, he added :

“If you ever come to my country, I will give you horses and sheep; many sheep. You shall come to my tent, you shall be my guest. I will sleep during the night at your head, for no harm shall happen to you, and you shall be loaded with presents.”

I accompanied the Mussulman back to his barrack, and assisted him to bed, for he was tipsy.

We may thus see, according to place and circumstance, they do not appear to be such ardent disciples of the prophet.

In a word, the Arab is wild, sober, intemperate, bold, avaricious, improvident, deceitful, ignorant;

but he comprehends all the efforts made to improve his condition, particularly as to his physical wants. He is clearly aware of the ruins which the war heaps up around him, and perfectly understands the riches the "dogs of Christians" bring him.

The ambition of a single man opposes a nearer connexion, equally desired by both parties so long in a state of warfare, and of which the advancement, whether in the defensive or in the offensive, varies so little. What firm and powerful hand will close this abyss, in which the wealth, activity, health, and life of so many men are being swallowed up, and will give either peace or destruction to these people, wearied themselves of so deplorable a state of affairs ?

THE ARAB WOMEN.

Whilst the men remain stretched before their tents, smoking in the sun, or skirmishing over the mountains and plains, the women are continually engaged with their domestic duties and their labour in the fields. They have the care of the tent, they grind the corn, knead the cakes, cook them, prepare the couscoussou, attend to the poultry, manufacture haïcks on a small frame, sweep the dung from the stable, saddle the horses, and collect the harvest.

They have beautiful eyes, their complexion pale and copper-coloured ; those considered the handsomest are strong, lusty, and powerful.

Their dress consists of chemise and a haïck.

They walk bare-footed, wear copper rings on

the wrist, and above the swelling of the ancle. I have seen some whose ears were adorned with three pair of coral ear-rings: one at the bottom, the other in the middle, and the third in the extremity of the ear; in addition, necklaces, formed of seraglio pastil, surround the neck. They cut their hair, but, nevertheless, allow a few locks to fall over their temples in the form of curls. They stain their nails and hands black and red, as also their eyebrows; they tattoo their foreheads, temples, and cheeks, in stars. The negro women especially have their faces slit with cuts of the razor; they are careful to make similar cuts in the cheeks of their children, whether male or female, in order to know them; each tribe among the negroes has its distinguishing mark. Man is the master, woman the slave; she is never consulted. The Arabs thought it very extraordinary Meurice should write to his wife, and that his wife answered his letters. The women belonging to wealthy husbands learn to read and write. They suckle their children and carry them on their backs, in the folds of their haïck. Those whose health forbids them nursing their children themselves, confide them to negro women. They stain their children's hair red. They sleep in a corner of the tent, separated from the men by a haïck, which forms a partition.

The condition of the women in this country may be expressed in one word—she is a *slave*.

THE HOSPITALITY OF THE ARABS.

The feeling of hospitality is natural to a wan-

dering people; those who pass their life in moving about often find themselves exposed, in unknown districts, to every hardship to which man is liable when he leaves the spot he inhabits. Thus arises amongst them the necessity of being received, and the desire of returning the same service to such of the brethren as may chance to be in a similar situation.

The Arabs undertake long pilgrimages; every believer must go once to Mecca. These travellers, during so long a journey, doubtless often suffer great privations in unknown and desert countries. The sight of a tent revives their strength and inspires hope. They salute their hosts, and promise themselves to exercise similar conduct when an occasion should offer. Formerly, at certain distances, priests inhabited houses called marabouts, in which the traveller always found an asylum during his journeys or pilgrimages.

The greatest part of these edifices are in ruins, abandoned, or destroyed. The travellers now seek hospitality in the tents of tribes they pass through. They are greeted with the most noble, most cordial, most generous reception, and the stranger (the Arab) is provided with every thing during his stay.

DISEASES.

The Turk Toussis, who had studied medicine at Tunis, and whose qualifications and science the reader has been able to appreciate, is the only doctor I have met with. He is established at Mascara. The Arabs pay no attention to their sick; they only stain beneath the eyes of the patient

black, with blacklead, the eyelashes and nails red. As soon as a man finds himself unwell they make him eat a great deal.

They often brought sick men to our tent.

“Why do you not nurse them?” said I to Ben-Faka.

“He must die,” replied he. “It is Mahomet who wills it; we must let him die.”

The Arabs are subject to sore eyes, and rheumatic pains in the limbs.

They bathe frequently, both in the river and in vapour baths, according to the season.

In spite of their fatalism, they have faith in medicine, and thought themselves very fortunate at having Christian doctors amongst them. We have seen the confidence they had in the medical experience of Mardulin, and it is to his title of doctor that Clinchard owed his life and the blows which, however, nearly deprived him of it.

ANIMALS.

The horse does not work before he is three years old. At this age he is mounted by children. He is destined for war, but the mares are reserved for breeding.

The Arabs only crop the hair until they are six years old; after this time they allow it to grow. Old horses are distinguished by magnificent manes and tails.

The horses are of the middle size, rather small than large; their form is lean and strong; they live entirely upon barley and straw; they drink

once a day, receive no attention, and remain exposed night and day, before the tent, to cold, heat, or rain. Those belonging to wealthy chiefs have the fore-feet shod. They live constantly with man, whose faithful companions they are, and this continuance of association renders them very docile; they never kick.

One day, a horse of Abd-el-Kader's succeeded in getting loose. He galloped and caracoled through the camp with fierce impetuosity; the Arabs formed a circle round him; the animal reared up, neighed, and appeared furious; but a horseman sprung on his back, when the Arabs immediately dispersed, and the horse, become gentle and submissive, was quietly led back to its place, and its feet tied.

The old horses, when no longer serviceable for war, draw the plough in the fields, together with the oxen.

Camels.—There are very few camels in the province of Oran. These animals are serviceable only during expeditions in the desert, and are of very little use in the mountains. They remain three or four days without eating, and are very particular in their food. Thus, in some places, such as Tékédemta, they find nothing for them to eat. Wealthy individuals have camels to transport their baggage. The caravans are not nearly so numerous as they formerly were; it is a rare occurrence for one of them to be formed.

Mules.—They carry the baggage; they are small sorry animals, and injured by hard work.

Asses.—They carry provisions to market; they are generally very small.

Oxen.—The Arabs make use of these animals for working and carrying burthens. They are very small and lean; they work along with mules or old horses, bound two-and-two. The extremity of the plough, the share of which is of wood, is fastened to a pole which passes under the belly of the animal, and to which are attached traces which are fixed to the horns of the ox, or to the neck of the horse.

Sheep, Goats.—These animals are very numerous, but I have not seen any very fine fleeces. The goat-skins are made into bottles, in which they keep butter, oil, and water. The Arabs preserve skins very badly, and send them to Blida and Morocco, where more skilful tanners prepare them better.

AGRICULTURE, TEMPERATURE.

The Arabs have a great quantity of land at their disposal, but they till it very badly, only giving it a single turn over. When they meet a palm tree, or brambles, they mark out a circle round the obstacle. They cultivate wheat and barley, but grow very few vegetables, and those only in their season.

During my stay it was the time for radishes and turnips. They have peas, beans, potatoes, onions, garlic, and a great quantity of pimento.

Many fruit trees are cultivated in the gardens round the towns, and cucumbers, gourds, water melons, and melons, are in abundance.

The grass is eaten by the horses.

The greatest part of the country is uncultivated and uninhabited, but beautiful plains are to be met with. The most beautiful and fertile spot is on the banks of the Ouet-Mina.

The winter is rainy. The excessive heat of the summer quickly dries up the rivulets, and the waters which cover the plains.

The nights are always very cool and damp. In my opinion this dampness and cold are very unfavourable to the cultivation of sugar, cotton, coffee, indigo, &c.; these colonial productions, at the most, would only grow on the sea coast, and in a few of the plains.

The climate of this country has a great similarity to that of the southern provinces of France, where we see lofty mountains, the summits of which are covered with snow, even during the hottest part of the summer.

In the mountains the temperature is very severe. Meurice and Berthoumian both died of cold.

The Arabs are subject to rheumatic pains, in consequence of the damp and cold.

In our journey from Miliana to Blida, we passed through a wood of magnificent olive trees. They might obtain a great quantity of oil in this country.

THE SULTAN,

SIDI-L' HADJ-ABD-EL-KADER-MAHIDIN.

The judgment formed respecting the Sultan seems to be greatly exaggerated. They wish to

represent Abd-el-Kader as a great man, a hero endowed with the most brilliant qualities. Let us endeavour to present his portrait in its true colours, and in a more suitable light.

Abd-el-Kader is of the Arab race, of the tribe of the Hachem. This tribe is situated to the south of Mascara ; it is one of the most important, and possesses large flocks. A part of the plain, a garden, and a marabout, belong to the Sultan individually. His three brothers, whom I have seen, and of whom the youngest is ten years old, and also his wife, dwell in this place.

The Sultan is still very young, and his uncle contests and disputes his authority. Nevertheless, in spite of his youth, and the embarrassment his uncle's rebellion causes him, and the disasters experienced from the French troops, Abd-el-Kader has established his power among the Arabs on a solid basis. The peace he has succeeded in establishing has not contributed a little to raise the ruins of his party, and to increase his influence among his partizans.

The Sultan has given proofs of courage in the earlier engagements he sustained against our troops. Since then he always remains at the distance of half a league from the fight. In spite of this inaction, which doubtlessly arises from prudence, the Arabs do not doubt his courage.

He was aware he was the only man capable of rallying the tribes, dispersed and frightened by the terror of our arms. He has raised himself as the standard around which the Arab nation should

collect, threatened by the conquerors of the Bey of Algiers, not with destruction, as he thinks, but with important modifications. Has Abd-el-Kader a sufficient force at his command to accomplish the work of resistance, to unite the tribes, to defend and dispute, foot by foot, the countries he is anxious to bring under his authority, after the defeat of the European invaders?

I shall reply no, to each of these questions.

His coffers are empty. The tribes who consent to pay impost pay very reluctantly. His pecuniary resources are almost nominal. His magazines contain neither clothing, guns, sabres, nor powder sufficient to equip and arm his troops. Our soldiers have killed many of their horses, and they must wait at least four years before a young horse is of any service.

If occasional convoys from Morocco bring supplies of every description to his camp, they are very poor assistance compared to the immense expenditure caused by a permanent war.

In order to succeed in the enterprise he has conceived, and of which he pursues the plan with intelligence and activity, Abd-el-Kader successfully employs the qualities with which he has been endowed by Heaven, and turns them to the very best advantage.

The pride, ambition, the thirst for power and rule, supported by the force of his will, his address, his cunning, his religious devotion, are the only arms the Sultan uses in the war he maintains against the Christians, and which he represents to

his subjects as a crusade, formed for the purpose of repulsing the enemies of Mahomet and the true believers.

Abd-el-Kader presents himself before his people, simple in his dress, frugal in his food, austere in his manners, rigid in his devotions, crafty in his negotiations, noble and proud on horseback, just and inflexible in pronouncing judgment, a declared enemy of the Christians, leading a wandering life, like the shepherd people from whom the tribes are sprung; and the Arab, before the *ensemble* of these qualities, of these habits, of this conduct, so excellent in the eyes of Mahomet, bows his head and follows, as if urged by the hand of the prophet—this man who hurries him to battle, after having comprehended and flattered in a wonderful manner his instinct and his passions.

Afterwards, when the French batallions defile in the plain, Abd-el-Kader, with his fifteen hundred paid troops, dragging with him a force of eighteen or twenty thousand Arabs, dashes from the mountains, watching a favourable opportunity to fall on the rear of his enemies.

After a *coup-de-main*, executed with boldness and impetuosity, the Arabs regain their inaccessible defiles, and wait a favourable opportunity for a fresh attack.

If the Sultan is poor, his troops do not require money; if the Sultan has no provisions, his soldiers will eat acorn flour; if the season is bad, the men and horses will endure, with impunity, the severest trials. Thus the enemy resists our reite-

rated attacks by his frugality, his audacity, and, above all, by his rapid flight, which it is impossible either to foresee or stop.

The Arab is not to be caught; the Sultan is aware of this advantage, and this is his motive for prolonging the war. If you wish to conquer, arrive at, and destroy him, employ an imposing force, send large bodies of cavalry, and, above all, grant neither truce nor rest to your enemy. Harass him unceasingly; have troops in reserve, and as soon as one expedition has returned, send out another. It is not a war of extermination, but a war which should lead to a complete submission.

Abd-el-Kader always told me he should succeed in driving away the French; but the Arabs are tired of the war, and at the first report of a peace give way to rejoicings, which plainly show their impatience and their desire of obtaining it.

Thus, so far, Abd-el-Kader only owes his personal superiority to the disposition he possessed at his birth. His mind is not cultivated, as has been said. He is an ignorant man; he is acquainted with the Koran, but he has never studied either literature, philosophy, or the sciences. He might have derived some advantage from his pilgrimage to Mecca, but he was only eight years of age when he accomplished this pious undertaking.

I told him of our Government, of the King, of the Chamber of Peers, of the Deputies, but he never understood a single word I said respecting them; he could not conceive the routine of our administration. He always looked upon it as a

despotic government. Nevertheless, he is generous and good, and is far more enlightened, and possesses better qualities, than the men who surround him.

He would never go to Oran during the peace, for fear of compromising his sanctity among the Arabs. Milloud-Ben-Harrach, commandant of the cavalry, is his intimate friend; it is he whom he has sent to our quarters to negotiate the peace. His principal secretary, a fanatic of the last degree, detesting the Christians even to absurdity, but nevertheless an intelligent man, has a great deal of influence over him. Ben-About and Ben-Faka are the two followers on whom he can rely the most.

He no longer advises the death of the French soldiers, but demands prisoners.

One day I attempted to strengthen him in this feeling.

“You should make prisoners; for if they obtained possession of a marabout, you would not have sufficient French prisoners for his ransom, if they should be required.”

“What matter! I could buy them with money.”

“The French do not sell men. And moreover, you are not rich; it is your interest to make prisoners.”

“But the Christians have only a few Arabs; I wish to take a General.”

“If you succeed in obtaining possession of a General, what will you say?”

“I shall say, I require for his ransom Oran, or Bona, or Algiers, or Mousthaganem.”

“Admitted they would allow you one of these towns, what would be the result?”

“I should have a town.”

“The next day they would drive you from it, as they drove from Algiers the Bey who reigned there.”

Abd-el-Kader also raises the courage of his troops by false intelligence, which his emissaries spread through the country. The most absurd reports are joyfully received.

His spies swarm in our posts; he is informed of all our projects and all our movements.

It is difficult to contend with an enemy who has such advantages on his side. The Arabs know the number of our forces, our power, our resources, our valour. The Arabs also appreciate the advantages we bring them.

On one side, a talented, courageous, but ambitious man, in a mountainous country, summoning around him the tribes surrounded by the ruins and the desolation, which both foreign and civil wars scatter over the soil. On the other side, a wealthy, powerful, civilized nation, calling them to her, and offering them, in return for their friendship and fidelity, riches, prosperity, and all the advantages to be derived from civilization.

After these observations, we may easily see the point to which all the efforts of our arms and of our policy ought to be directed.

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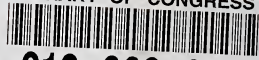
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